Characteristics of the Early Church.

Rev. J. J. BURKE.

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CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EARLY CHURCH.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EARLY CHURCH.

BY

REV. J. J. BURKE,

Author of "Reasonableness of Catholic Ceremonies and Practices."

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Emprímatur:

✠ James Cardinal Gibbons,
Archbishop of Baltimore.

Approbation of Bishop Spalding.

Peoria, Ill., *May* 23, 1899.

My Dear Father Burke:—

I have examined your little volume on the early Christian life and I feel confident that it will do good. Whatever helps to make us realize and love the life of Our Divine Lord and of His apostles and early disciples, renders us the highest and most important service. Your efforts will, I trust, contribute to this end, and thereby enlighten and comfort many.

Very sincerely yours,

✠ J. L. Spalding,
Bishop of Peoria.

Letter of Commendation from the President of St. Francis' Seminary.

St. Francis, Wis., *May* 7, 1899.

Dear Father Burke:—

I read your manuscript on the Characteristics of the Early Church and must say that I consider it a very valuable addition to our Catholic literature. It is calculated to do good to our people and to all who earnestly seek the truth.

Wishing you God's blessing for your new work and all your future undertakings, I remain

Yours sincerely,

J. Rainer,
Prest. Sem. St. Francis.

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PREFACE.

All admit that the Christians of the first five centuries believed and practiced the true religion of Jesus Christ, pure and undefiled.

What a blessing to be so intimately connected with the Author of all truth and the Source of all grace!

What a privilege to learn the truths of salvation from the lips of the Saviour and His immediate disciples!

When the Saviour departed hence He left a representative. This representative, His church, He commanded all to hear. "He that heareth you heareth Me" (*Luke* x., 16). This representative was to continue to the end of time. "Behold, I am with you all days" (*Matt.* xxviii., 20), and was to be taught all truth by the Holy Ghost. "When he the spirit of truth is come he will teach you all truth" (*John* xvi., 13).

Consequently, the true church of to-day must teach the same doctrines taught by Jesus Christ and the church of the early ages of Christianity.

Certain non-Catholics are just now making strong claims to Apostolic succession.

On this account many are anxious to study the teachings and practices of the early church.

Those unable to consult the writings of the Fathers in the original, or such works as Waterworth's *Faith of Catholics* and reliable church histories will, perhaps, be interested in this brief study of early Christian life. It will, it is hoped, give those not having leisure to consult more bulky volumes, a fair idea of the propagation, organization, writers, teachings, trials and triumphs of the early church.

The primary object, however, of the following pages is to show as briefly and clearly as possible that the teachings and practices of the Catholic Church of to-day are identical with those of the Early Church.

BLOOMINGTON, ILL., *June*, 1899.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EARLY CHURCH.

CHAPTER I.

THE PROPAGATION OF THE EARLY CHURCH.

ITS first five centuries was the golden age of Christianity. During that time millions of Christians received the martyr's crown for steadfast belief in the teachings of Jesus Christ.

These doctrines they learned from the authorized teachers of the church long before the existence and general diffusion of the New Testament. To form a just estimate of the true church of to-day we must know something of the early church. We gain this knowledge from contemporary history and from the New Testament.

1. During the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, there appeared among the oldest people of the world a remarkable personage, a great prophet. His words and acts are well known.

That Christ really did appear in Palestine, an insignificant portion of the Roman Empire; that

He founded a society; that He chose disciples and for three years taught them the truths of salvation; that some of His disciples wrote books—these are facts that all will admit.

It is easy to see that the facts narrated in the four Gospels, the Acts, and the few letters of the Apostles are at least as true as those narrated by any profane historian. The most enlightened people in existence profess belief in the Gospel truths and Gospel miracles. This has been true of every age and of every clime. When they wrote, the facts narrated by the evangelists were recent. They could have been easily denied, if not true. But instead of denying them, the very Pagans and Jews show by their silence as well as by their words that "Indeed this is the Son of God, and these things narrated of Him are true."

Christ redeemed us as Teacher, Priest and King. As teacher, by preaching His heavenly doctrine; as priest, by the sacrifice of the cross; and as king, ruler or pastor, by giving laws and commandments.

He gave this triple office of teacher, priest and pastor to the teaching body of the church, the Apostles and their successors, when He said, "Going therefore teach all nations." "Do this in commemoration of me." "He that heareth you, heareth me."

The society founded by Christ rapidly grew in numbers and importance. After His glorious Ascension the Apostles returned to Jerusalem and

remained ten days in prayer until the coming of the Holy Ghost. Then they separated to preach the Gospel to every creature.

St. Andrew penetrated the frozen regions of the north; St. Thomas turned his face towards the east; St. James dared the dangers of the west; others went to various portions of Europe, Asia and Africa; while the intrepid Peter, after laboring some time in Asia, entered the imperial city of the Cæsars.

At his first sermon in Jerusalem Peter converted three thousand persons. Paul was soon converted and received the mission to convert the Gentiles.

After the Apostolic age the growth of the church is due principally to the bishops. St. Gregory Thaumaturgus is an example of this. When he became bishop, he found only seventeen Christians, and when he died there were only seventeen who were not Christians in his diocese.

The most influential church of Asia was that of Antioch. St. Peter was the first bishop of this see, before he went to Rome. His successor was Euodius. The successor of Euodius was St. Ignatius, who suffered martyrdom about the year 117 A. D.

In Syria were founded the flourishing churches of Seleucia, Berœa, Cyrus and Samosata, while in Phenicia were those of Tyre, Sidon, Berytus, Ptolemais and Tripolis.

In Asia Minor, Ephesus and Smyrna rapidly grew into prominence as Christian communities; as also did Laodicea, Colossa and Hierapolis in Phrygia.

In the beginning of the second century, Pliny said that the superstition called Christianity was rapidly spreading in Bithynia.

A Christian church was established at Edessa in the year 288, and in various parts of Mesopotamia about the beginning of the fourth century. Even in the island of Cyprus there were three bishops before the Council of Nice in 325. The first bishop of Alexandria was St. Mark, the Evangelist. Mark is sometimes called John Mark. He accompanied Paul and Barnabas to Antioch and Cyprus. He afterwards went to Rome where he labored for some time with the Prince of the Apostles and wrote his Gospel.

St. Peter sent his disciples from Rome to found other churches, as his glorious successor Leo XIII. does at the present time. Peter sent Mark into Egypt and appointed him bishop of Alexandria.

The church made such wonderful progress in Alexandria that the Pagans resolved to put St. Mark to death. This they did by cruelly dragging his mangled body over rough stones until he expired on the 25th day of April, 68 A. D.

In the year 235 a council of the bishops of Africa was held and was attended by twenty bishops.

Twenty-one years afterwards, when St. Cyprian was bishop of Carthage, another was held at which eighty-seven were present. Carthage soon became the principal African bishopric.

Christianity grew so rapidly that in the beginning of the third century Tertullian said that the Christians outnumbered the Pagans.

2. The twelve Apostles were Jews. They were at first inclined to confine their labors among their own people. To St. Paul more than to any one man is the rapid propagation of the early church due. St. Paul before his conversion was known as Saul. He was born at Tarsus, in Cilicia in Western Asia about ten years after the Saviour's birth. According to the Jewish law that every male Jew should learn some useful trade, he learned that of tentmaker and for some time supported himself by his trade.

He studied the law and the prophets, the books of the Old Law, at Jerusalem. Gamaliel, the most learned rabbi of the time, was his teacher. Saul belonged to the sect of Pharisees and took a leading part in persecuting the Christians. When St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, was stoned to death Saul was one of the principal instigators of that cruel deed. Shortly afterwards he was going to Damascus to search for Christians in order to bring them before the Jewish courts when he was miraculously converted.

After his conversion he was known as Paul. He became a most zealous promoter of Christianity, "a preacher and an apostle, a doctor of the Gentiles in faith and truth."

About the year 45 St. Paul began his first great mission. He started from Antioch with Mark and

Barnabas. They travelled four years over land and sea. He established Christian churches in the Island of Cyprus and in many places in Asia Minor. He ordained priests and bishops to instruct and govern the new congregations.

About the year 51 St. Paul attended the first Christian Council at Jerusalem. After this he set out on his second great missionary tour. During this time he spread the faith in other portions of Asia, Macedonia and in Greece.

He visited Athens, the center of art, science and refinement.

When the learned Athenians heard the earnest words of the inspired Apostle many of them believed. Among them was Dionysius, one of the most celebrated—who, it is believed, was afterwards known as St. Denis, first Apostle of France. Many, however, contend that Denis, the Areopagite, first bishop of Athens, and Denis of Paris were two separate persons.

During the course of his third missionary tour St. Paul spent some time in Ephesus. He was arrested by the Jews and spent two years in prison in Cesarea and two years in Rome. Having been set at liberty he probably went to Spain. Returning, he founded many churches in Crete and other places, and finally, about the year 67, joined St. Peter in Rome. After preaching to the Pagans of Rome and converting many of them, he and St. Peter were thrown into the Mamertine prison.

Finally, the time came for him to receive the crown of martyrdom. On the same day that Peter, the chief pastor, was crucified, head downwards, Paul was dragged from prison to the Ostian road and beheaded. This occurred during Nero's persecution, June 29, 67 A. D.

St. Paul contributed more than any other Apostle to carry the faith far and wide. The clearness of his logic and the eloquence of his preaching were powerful in removing error and spreading truth.

3. St. Peter, who suffered martyrdom the same day that St. Paul was beheaded, was believed by the early Christians, and his successor has always been believed to be the chief bishop and head of the Christian Church.

After Our Lord's ascension, Peter having preached the Gospel in many places in Judea, Cappadocia and Galilee, went to Antioch and established an episcopal see. He remained at Antioch about seven years. About the year 42 he went to Rome and established the center of the Christian Church. St. Peter governed the church of Rome for twenty-five years.

That the early Christians looked upon St. Peter as chief Pastor of the whole church may be seen from the following facts. After Our Lord's ascension he took the lead in every important matter. He presided at the election of Mathias to fill the place made vacant by the defection of Judas; he was the first to address the multitude after the descent of the

Holy Ghost; he presided over the first Christian Council at Jerusalem, and his name always stands first in the catalogue of the Apostles, given by the Evangelists, thus showing that the Apostles themselves acknowledged his primacy.

St. Cyprian, in the third century, writing *De Unitate* shows clearly what the belief of the early church was when he says, "the primacy is given to Peter, that the church of Christ may be set forth as one."

St. Peter established at Rome the seat of ecclesiastical power. Ever since his time Rome has been the center of Christianity. The young church, baptized in the blood of the great Apostles, Peter and Paul, grew rapidly.

In the third century, besides her chief bishop, the pope, Rome had 150 priests. Other Italian cities could also boast of large and influential congregations.

4. The mustard-seed scattered by St. Paul in Spain grew and flourished. As early as the middle of the third century there were bishops at Cordova, Toledo, Leon, Tarragona and Elvira, having under their spiritual jurisdiction hundreds of priests and thousands of faithful followers of the Saviour. At the Synod of Elvira, in 306, nineteen Spanish bishops were present.

5. There were flourishing churches at Lyons and Vienne in France in the second century. St. Irenæus went from Asia to France about the close

of the second century, labored effectually for the propagation of Christianity, became bishop of Lyons and shed his blood for the faith in the year of Our Lord 202.

The young church in France, or Gaul, grew rapidly, especially after the conversion of King Clovis in 496.

6. The glad tidings of the Gospel reached the Britains at an early age. At the Council of Arles, in 314, the bishops of York, London and Lincoln were in attendance. About the middle of the fifth century, however, the pagan Anglo-Saxons almost destroyed the church in that country. The following century Pope Gregory the Great sent St. Augustine with forty missionaries to revive the faith almost extinguished by the Pagans.

7. In Ireland, St. Patrick preached the truths of Christianity early in the fifth century. He was sent by Pope Celestine. His efforts were abundantly blessed by Heaven. In a few years the whole people became faithful Catholics. So numerous were the holy and learned men who went from Ireland to convert other people, that she became known as the "Island of Saints."

In other countries the Christian religion was not established until after their soil was moistened by the blood of many martyrs immolated to their false gods. But Ireland furnished a glorious exception. Her great apostle labored undisturbed in his holy vocation for thirty years. He was so successful

in his teaching, that in thirty years he firmly laid the foundation of that faith which centuries of persecution have been unable to undermine.

8. At the beginning of the fourth century the conversion of the Emperor Constantine gave peace to the church. The emperor requested Pope Sylvester to convoke the Council of Nice, the first general council and the first council of much importance since the Council of Jerusalem in the year 51. At the Council of Nice, in the year 325, so numerous had the Christians become, that 318 bishops were present. Hosius, a legate of Pope Sylvester, presided. Arius, who denied the Divinity of Christ, was condemned by this Council.

The Council of Constantinople in 381 was the second general council. The next general council was that of Ephesus. It was convened by order of Pope Celestine in 431 A. D. Nearly 300 bishops were at this council, some say 274. The most important event of this council was the condemnation of the heretic Nestorius and the declaration of the doctrine that Mary is the Mother of God. Cyril of Alexandria presided at this council as representative of the pope.

Mention is made of these councils here not only to show the rapid propagation of the early church, but also to show that the general councils of the primitive church were convoked by order of the pope just as was the last council of the Vatican in the nineteenth century.

9. From this brief review it will be readily seen that the rapid propagation of early Christianity is an historical fact that cannot be denied, and that the church of the first five centuries and the Catholic Church of to-day are identical. For the bishop of Rome was head of the church then as he is at the present time. He convened the ecumenical councils. He sent Patrick, Augustine and other missionaries to convert the heathen. Everywhere the missionaries were most successful. God blessed their labors. Induced by no earthly considerations, led on by the hope of no temporal reward, undaunted by the fear of ignominy, the rich and the poor, the old and the young, the learned and unlearned, the Jew and the Gentile, meekly bowed their heads to the yoke of Christ and followed a crucified God. When we remember that to follow Jesus in these early ages of the church was to lose everything, and often to lose life itself, we cannot but be lost in admiration at this wonderful propagation of the church, and with one of the early fathers exclaim: "Either the Catholic Church was founded by means of miracles or it was not. If it was, it is Divine. Because no one but God can perform or authorize a miracle. If it was not, it is Divine. Because such a rapid propagation of truths so repugnant to the natural inclinations of man would be the greatest of all miracles."

In either case this wonderful propagation, this rapid growth of the early church unanswerably shows its Divinity.

CHAPTER II.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE EARLY CHURCH.

WE have considered the wonderful growth of the church. We will now examine its early organization as an institution. Its most noticeable exterior characteristic is the hierarchy.

By the hierarchy is meant the organization of degrees, ranks and orders among the ministers of the church. The hierarchy is of Divine appointment. For we find that various grades of dignity among the clergy existed even in Apostolic times. At the head of the clergy may be found Peter and his successors, the bishops of Rome.

The clergy were divided into bishops, priests and deacons.

10. The writers of the early church tell us that bishops have in the church the office of teacher, priest and ruler. By their ordinary power they preached, governed, ordained and administered the other sacraments. Priests preached, officiated at Mass and administered the sacraments, except Holy Orders and Confirmation. Deacons assisted the priest in his various duties; but deacons and priests officiated only by the authority of the bishop.

The order of sub-deacon and minor orders were added to the other orders by the church at an early date.

(On the banks of Genesareth Jesus Christ chose Peter as His vicar.) As the pontiff is not omnipresent, Peter and the other Apostles imposed hands upon others as the needs of the growing church demanded; and these bishops ordained priests who were given the same authority in their parishes as the Pope had over the whole world or the bishop in his diocese.

The Apostles were to teach with the power and authority of God: "As the Father sent Me, I also send you." "Go, therefore, and teach all nations." This teaching was to continue to the end of time. "Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." Since the Apostles were not to exist till the end of time, since they actually died before the consummation of the world, it remains as a necessary consequence that this teaching has been continued by their successors, the bishops and priests of the Catholic Church.

The Apostles understood that it was by a living, teaching ministry this work was to be carried on. For we find it recorded in the fourteenth chapter of the Acts that, after Paul and Barnabas had been instructing the people of Iconium and Lystra for some time, they "ordained priests for them in every church" and then went elsewhere.

St. Paul instructed Timothy to commend the things he heard from him "to faithful men who

shall be fit to teach others." Paul consecrated Titus bishop of Crete for the express purpose of ordaining other bishops and priests that the ministry might be perpetuated.

11. That the religious society founded by the Saviour might have an external bond of union, He chose one of the Apostles who was to be its recognized head. This was Peter, the rock upon which He built His church. Christ also made Peter Shepherd of all nations and gave him the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Scripture clearly teaches that it was the will of God that one Supreme pastor should preside over His church. The usage of the Apostolic age and of succeeding ages confirms this teaching of Scripture.

As bishops inherit the Apostolic authority and office, so the pope inherits the primacy and prerogatives of Peter whose successor he is. Tertullian in the second century calls the bishop of Rome, "The bishop of bishops." St. Cyprian, who lived in the third century, says the episcopal see of Rome is "the chair of Peter, the center of ecclesiastical unity, with which all bishops must be in communion."

St. Paul, Ignatius, and others of the first and following centuries, point out the essential division of the clergy into bishops, priests and deacons.

12. The word bishop is from the Greek word επισκοπος, *episcopus*, which means overseer. The early Christians adopted the word as the title of the

church dignitary who had received the highest sacred orders and who had the authority to rule a diocese as its chief pastor.

Thus we find that St. James the Less was the first bishop of Jerusalem. St. Paul gave Titus and Timothy power to ordain priests, *i. e.*, he consecrated them bishops.

The angels of the seven churches spoken of in the Apocalypse were the bishops. Each of the angels represented a church and was responsible for its faith and morals. (This is the office of a bishop.)

Polycarp, the disciple of St. John, was bishop of Smyrna. The letters of St. Ignatius in the second century show that the episcopacy was established in his time and that he was bishop of Antioch. St. Irenæus was bishop of Lyons, France, in the third century. He says in one of his epistles that St. Paul at Miletus convoked "the bishops and the presbyters," or priests.

The bishop in the early church, as in later times, was considered the successor of the Apostles. He received the sacrament of Holy Orders in its fullness. Like the Apostles he could confirm, ordain priests, and consecrate bishops.

The pope is simply a bishop. But he has jurisdiction over the whole world and all other bishops are in union with and subject to him as the successor of St. Peter.

13. The manner of choosing bishops in the early church did not differ essentially from that in use at

the present time. As we have already seen, the first bishops, Matthias, Timothy, Titus and others, were chosen by the Apostles, some of them after lots were cast. St. Cyprian, in the third century, tells us that bishops were chosen by the vote of the people and judgment of the bishops of the province. In many cases the bishops alone chose the bishop.

The Council of Nice, in the fourth century, decreed, or recommended, that a bishop be appointed by the bishops of the province. The metropolitan, or archbishop, had the right to confirm the choice, which afterwards was reserved to the pope.

In the beginning the bishop, assisted by priests who lived with him, usually performed the pastoral duties. During the fourth and fifth centuries the present parochial system was formed. The bishop began at that time to charge each individual priest with the care of a particular portion of the diocese.

14. Among holy orders that of priest ranks second to that of bishop. Ignatius, Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian and others of the first five centuries frequently mention the duties of the priest. From the very beginning he has been looked upon as the minister of Christ.

Jesus Christ chose the priest that he might aid in the work for which He came upon earth. What a noble mission! To aid Jesus Christ in saving souls, to offer the Eucharistic Sacrifice for them, to teach them the truths of salvation, to loose them from their sins, to pray for them, to baptize them, to

minister to them, and to fill them with heavenly blessings. For such a high mission did Jesus Christ choose the priest.

The duties of the priest are important, his responsibility great. He stands at the Altar of God, where he has the body and blood of Christ entrusted to him, which he offers for the people. He is empowered to sit in the sacred tribunal of Penance and say to the penitent, "Thy sins are forgiven thee."

When the young couple first start out on the journey of life the priest blesses their union. Through his ministry at the baptismal font children are made heirs of heaven. The priest instructs them and trains them to become good Christians and good citizens. He prepares them to receive the Bread of Life. He is the good Shepherd leading back the erring one. He prepares the dying to make their last journey. When dead he offers the prayers of the church for them. One of his principal duties is to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass to God for the living and the dead.

These are the duties of the priest to-day. That they were the duties of the priest of the early church a glance at the writings of the fathers of the first five centuries as well as the following quotations from the Apostolic Constitutions will show: "We enjoin that a bishop be ordained by three bishops, or at least by two. . . . But a priest, as also a deacon, and the rest of the clergy by one bishop;

but neither priest nor deacon is to ordain clerics. The priest is to teach, to offer (the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass), to *baptize* and *bless* the people; and the deacon, to minister to the bishop and to the priests."

15. Deacons constitute the third order of the hierarchy instituted by Our Lord. They are successors of the seven blameless men whom the Apostles selected to distribute alms and take care of the poor. It is the duty of the deacon "to minister at the altar, to baptize and to preach." His duty consists principally in assisting a priest at Solemn High Mass.

Besides bishops, priests and deacons, the other grades of the hierarchy are subdeacons, acolytes, exorcists, readers and ostiaries. The last four of these are called minor orders, and the others major or sacred orders.

16. If there is one thing more than another clearly proved by history, it is the fact that these various degrees or grades of dignity and authority existed among the ministers of the church in the early ages. The pope was everywhere recognized as head of the universal church; while the bishop was recognized as head of his diocese and the clergy were subject to his jurisdiction.

The uniform constitution or organization of all the churches in Christendom show that the episcopate is of Divine institution.

St. Ignatius, who lived at the end of the first and beginning of the second century, says, "Let

each of you obey his *bishop* as Christ did His Father, and *priests* as the Apostles, and give honor to *deacons* as to God's commandments."

The various degrees of dignity among the clergy form, as we have seen, what is called the hierarchy. At its head is the pope. His power and authority are spiritual and are derived from heaven. He is the infallible guide and ruler of Christ's kingdom on earth.

17. Christ built this kingdom for Himself. In it He lives and reigns. Notwithstanding opposition and persecution, He upholds it now as He did in the early ages; He carries on His work of Redemption, he teaches His doctrine, promulgates His laws and administers His sacraments and means of grace through the hierarchy; and this He will continue to do until time shall be no more. For He has promised that the Holy Ghost shall teach His church all truth, and that He Himself will abide with her forever, "even to the consummation of the world."

CHAPTER III.

THE FATHERS AND WRITERS OF THE EARLY CHURCH.

CHRISTIANITY began without the advantages of wealth, culture or position. Its first apostles were poor unlearned fishermen. Only three or four of them, Peter, James and John, were in any way prominent, while the name of Matthew lives chiefly because he wrote one of the Gospels.

St. Paul, one of the greatest minds of any age, was not one of the twelve. After St. Paul, and the other inspired writers, the most important writers and fathers of the first century were: Barnabas, Hermas and Clement of Rome; of the second century, Ignatius, Polycarp and Justin; of the third century, Tertullian, Origen and Cyprian; of the fourth century, Athanasius, Ambrose and Basil; of the fifth century, Chrysostom, Augustine and Cyril of Alexandria.

18. First Century.

Barnabas, Hermas and Clement.

Barnabas was a companion of St. Paul on some of his missionary journeys. He was born in Cyprus of Jewish parents. He was one of the earliest con-

verts, and, selling his property, gave the proceeds to the common Christian fund. St. Luke, in the Acts, calls him "a good man and full of the Holy Ghost."

After Paul's conversion he and Barnabas labored for some time in Antioch and converted many people. They went from Antioch to Seleucia in Syria and thence to Cyprus. Everywhere their labors were crowned with success. While Barnabas was preaching at Salamis, in Syria, some Jews raised a mob and stoned him to death. His remains were found near the city with a copy of the Gospel of St. Matthew, which he had copied himself in Hebrew, on his breast. His death occurred about the year 73 A. D., and a festival in his honor is celebrated by the Catholic Church each year on the 11th of June.

He is known as a writer on account of an epistle which he wrote in Greek. There is no doubt that this epistle belongs to the apostolic age, and there seems but little doubt that it was written by Barnabas, though the church never received it into the canon of Holy Scripture.

The author of this epistle shows much Hebrew and Scriptural knowledge and endeavored to convince the Jewish converts that the ceremonies of the old dispensation were abolished by the New Law.

He teaches excellent precepts of morality, emphasizing particularly the virtues of humility, meekness, patience, charity and chastity. His epistle

shows that the first day of the week was kept holy in apostolic times.

Hermas, the author of The Pastor, was a disciple of St. Paul. This book teaches the doctrine of Purgatory, free will and other Catholic doctrines. It is divided into three parts, Visions, Commandments and Parables.

Hermas calls the book Pastor, or Shepherd, from the angel who appeared to him as a shepherd and whose teachings he professes to write. He assigns to every one an angel guardian, and a devil who is a tempter; recommends prayers, almsgiving and other good works; approves a state of continency, and speaks of the necessity of confession.

Clement of Rome is, after the inspired writers, the most important of the ecclesiastical writers of the first century. He wrote several epistles, of which the two epistles to the Corinthians are the best known. He was bishop of Rome from 91 to 100 A. D., succeeding St. Cletus, the successor of St. Linus who succeeded St. Peter, the first Pope. He received a martyr's crown during the third general persecution, under Trajan, 100 A. D. His festival is celebrated November 23.

The faithful at Corinth seemed to be continually in trouble. St. Paul in his time had to settle some disputes among them. A division arose among them again about the year 96. St. John, the apostle, was still living; but it devolved upon Clement, the bishop of Rome, as successor of St. Peter and

head of the church, to settle the dispute He wrote to them his epistle which Eusebius calls "an admirable work." He laments that the Corinthians, who formerly were humble and sincere Christians, had fallen into pride, envy and contentions; and he exhorts them to lay aside all pride and anger. He reminds them that Christ is theirs who are humble, not theirs who are proud. "Let your children," he says, "be brought up in the instruction of the Lord, and learn how great a power humility has with God, how much a pure and holy charity avails with Him, and how excellent and great His fear is."

He also speaks to them of the resurrection. The second Epistle of St. Clement to the Corinthians which remains is fragmentary and is rather a sermon than an epistle. In it he exhorts the faithful to despise this world and its false enjoyments and to have heavenly joys always in their thoughts. He lays down the necessity of subduing our passions as the foundation of a Christian life.

It has been claimed that St. Clement was the author of the Apostolic Constitutions and the Apostolic Canons. While they, perhaps, owe their origin to a later date, a word about them here will not be inappropriate.

19. *The Apostolic Constitutions* are a collection of regulations consisting of eight books. Though they contain many errors, they are valuable sources of information on many points of discipline and liturgy.

They deal with the proper behavior of Christians, with the officers and service of the church. They also treat of public worship, of the administration of the sacraments and the duties of the clergy.

20. *The Apostolic Canons* are at the end of the last book of the Apostolic Constitutions. They consist of eighty-five rules to guide the clergy. In them we find the various degrees of the hierarchy—bishops, priests and deacons. They forbid the marriage of bishops, priests or deacons. They speak of altars, of sacrifice, and regulate the administration of Holy Eucharist and Penance. They clearly show what the Christians of the first and following centuries believed to be the discipline established by the Apostles.

Second Century.

21. Ignatius, Polycarp and Justin.

Ignatius was a disciple of St. John and was the third bishop of Antioch. It is believed that he was the child embraced by the Saviour when He said, "Unless you become as little children you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven." He suffered martyrdom about the year 117 A. D. He is, perhaps, the most interesting personage of the second century. He is the reputed author of many works, of which only seven epistles are considered genuine.

These seven epistles of St. Ignatius refute the errors of his day; use no testimony but the scrip-

ture; speak of the Apostolic gifts still flourishing in the church; and are quoted by later writers as the work of Ignatius.

When Ignatius was arrested he was taken to Rome to be thrown to beasts in the Flavian amphitheater. On the way he visited with Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna. Here he wrote four of his letters, those to Ephesus, Magnesia, Tralles and Rome. In his letter to Rome he asked the Christians not to use any influence to prevent his martyrdom.

His letters show his great zeal, his firm faith and fervent devotion to his Saviour. They also show the organization of the church at that early day. In them we see the various degrees of the clergy. Bishops are clearly distinguished from priests and priests from deacons. "Hearken to your bishops," he says, "and to the priesthood and to the deacons."

Polycarp, as well as Ignatius, was a disciple of St. John the Evangelist. He became the bishop of Smyrna and was martyred about the year 169 A. D. Polycarp's epistle to the Philippians is a valuable document, showing as it does the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist and that of Holy Orders.

St. Irenæus says of this epistle, "And Polycarp not only instructed by the Apostles, and associated with many of those who saw our Lord, but also made bishop of Smyrna, in Asia, by the Apostles whom we ourselves saw in our early age . . . . . There exists a perfect epistle of Polycarp, written to the Philippians, from which those who wish, and who

have regard for their salvation, may learn the quality of his faith, and the preaching of truth."

Polycarp exhorts his readers to avoid heresy and avarice and to follow the example of the martyr Ignatius and others. Polycarp was a pure, true, sincere Christian, a humble follower of the Master.

Justin, one of the greatest writers of the second century, was born in Samaria in 105, and suffered martyrdom at Rome in 166 A. D. When about 30 years of age he was converted to Christianity. About the year 145 he wrote a polemical work against heretics, especially against Marcion.

His magnificent apology addressed to Antoninus Pius is the most perfect specimen of those early simple but eloquent defenses of Christianity.

He wrote another apology addressed to Marcus Aurelius. He was a distinguished pagan philosopher in his younger days, who vainly sought the truth in the various systems of Greek philosophy. Finally, his attention was attracted to Christianity. Having become a Christian, his spirit of truth, of honesty, of uprightness, of faith, merited for him the martyr's crown.

Third Century.

22. Tertullian, Origen and Cyprian.

Tertullian (Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus), was a noted controversialist of the third century. He was born of pagan parents at Carthage

about the year 150 and died about the year 220 A. D. He was a learned lawyer who, about the year 190, was converted to Christianity and became a priest. He preached at Carthage, Rome and other places, and afterwards joined the Montanists, a sect of heretics. Notwithstanding his fall into error, his works are an authority on the teaching of the early church.

He was a fearless champion of the church against Jews and pagans. His "Apologeticus" is one of the best defenses of the church against the pagans. Among his other writings may be mentioned "Against the Jews," "Against Hermogenes," in which he shows that matter is not eternal, but created by God; "On Baptism"; "On The Resurrection"; in all of these and in about twenty other books we see that the teaching of the early church did not differ materially from that of the Catholic Church of to-day. Tertullian was a man of great ability, persuasive eloquence and deep learning.

Origen, on account of his great industry, was called "The man of iron." He was born in Alexandria about the year 185 and died from the effects of imprisonment, at Tyre, in the year 249.

When but 18 years of age he succeeded Clement of Alexandria in the professors' chair, and, although he fell into some errors, he won for himself immortal fame for maintaining the purity of, and explaining the Scriptures.

In the year 212, by his learning and eloquence,

he converted Ambrose, who afterwards became a great writer and doctor of the church.

Some of the writings of Origen were philosophical, some controversial and some practical. Many of them are lost. Those that remain are, "On Prayer," "On Principles," "On Martyrdom," "Against Celsus," and the Hexapla and Octapla. The Hexapla was an edition of the Old Testament in 6 different columns, the Octapla in 8 different versions in parallel columns.

His most celebrated work is his apology for Christianity contained in the eight books "Against Celsus." It is regarded as the most complete defense of Christianity that appeared in the early ages of the church.

His zeal for the church, his great learning, his wonderful industry, his able defense of truth, and his sufferings for it have made him one of the most remarkable personages in the history of God's church.

St. Cyprian was bishop of Carthage. He is principally noted for his defense of the Unity of the Church. "All the life and blessings of Christianity," he writes, "depend on the union of the faithful with their bishops, and of all the bishops with the mother church of Rome."

Cyprian was born at Carthage of pagan parentage. He was a lawyer and a successful teacher of rhetoric. He was converted by Cecilius, a priest of Carthage, about the year 246 and afterwards devoted

himself to the study of Scripture and the Christian writers. He was particularly delighted with the writings of Tertullian, whose genius he admired, while he was careful to avoid his errors.

After his baptism he made such advancement in virtue that the people requested that he be ordained priest; and, shortly afterwards, in the year 248, he was made bishop of the then important see of Carthage. On September 16, 258, he received the crown of martyrdom.

Besides his book on the "Unity of the Church" St. Cyprian's principal writings were, "On Contempt of the World," "On the Vanity of Idols," "On Virgins," "On Good Works, "On Celibacy of the Clergy," "On Mortality."

In the last of these he exhorts Christians to imitate the saints and martyrs if they wish to go to heaven. "There we shall meet with the glorious choir of apostles, prophets, martyrs and virgins. There we shall behold the rewards of those who, by feeding the hungry and aiding the afflicted, have with their earthly treasure purchased to themselves a treasure in heaven."

Fourth Century.

23. Athanasius, Ambrose and Basil.

Athanasius is known principally on account of his connection with the condemnation of Arianism. He is one of the great doctors of the Eastern Church.

St. Athanasius was born at Alexandria about the year 296, and died May 2, 373 A. D. On account of his talents and virtue his good Christian parents were solicitous to procure for him the best education possible.

Alexander, the bishop of Alexandria, directed his studies, ordained him a deacon in 319, took him into his house as his secretary and was guided by his prudence, virtue and learning. After the death of Alexander in 326, Athanasius was unanimously elected to succeed him. St. Cyril tells us he was bishop of Alexandria for 46 years, and ruled with mildness and firmness. St. Gregory Nazianzen says of him: "When I praise Athanasius virtue itself is my theme; for I name every virtue as often as I mention him who possessed all virtues. He was the true pillar of the church. His life and conduct were the rule of bishops, and his doctrine the rule of orthodox faith."

In the year 325, while he was still a deacon, he accompanied Bishop Alexander to the Council of Nice, where he became conspicuous on account of the great zeal and learning with which he combated Arius and his teachings. His great triumph over Arius will be treated more fully in the chapters on the Councils, and on the trials of the church.

His principal writings were, "Four Orations against Arius," "Discourse Against Pagans," "On the Incarnation," "The Trinity," and on "Virginity," in all of which he teaches the same truths

taught by the Catholic Church to-day. His style was strong, clear and elegant.

Four emperors, Constantine, Constantius, Julian and Valens tried to destroy him. Almost the whole world turned against him and persecuted him. But he triumphed over all. He was kind to his enemies, patient in trials and courageous in persecutions. Like his Divine Model, he was humble, modest and charitable.

Ambrose is one of the four great Doctors, or Fathers, of the Western Church. The others are Augustine, Jerome, and Gregory the Great. St. Ambrose was born in Gaul about the year 340, and died at Milan, 397 A. D. In his youth he studied law and afterwards was governor of one of the Roman provinces. He ruled with wisdom and justice.

In the year 374 he was baptized and unanimously chosen bishop of Milan. He governed his diocese with apostolic zeal, firmness and kindness. He was a true, good and faithful shepherd. His sermons were models of zeal and eloquence. His sermon on Celibacy shows the antiquity of that Catholic practice. Many of his hymns are still sung in the church; for example, *Aeterne rerum Conditor* and *Deus Creator omnium.*

To his eloquence we owe the conversion of the greatest Doctor of the church, St. Augustine. Kind and charitable to all, he was firm and unbending when a principle was at stake. He rebuked the

Emperor Valentinian, defied Maximus and would not permit Theodosius to enter the church during the celebration of Mass until he had done penance for his wicked deeds.

In his book on the "Mysteries" St. Ambrose gives instructions for the newly baptized, explains the ceremonies of baptism and confirmation and clearly explains the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist. He exhorts the faithful to frequent communion, because the Holy Eucharist is our spiritual bread.

He wrote "The Creation," "On Paradise," "On Fasting," "On the Sacraments," "Commentaries on the Scripture," etc.

St. Ambrose tempered his inflexibility where the Divine Law was concerned and authority of a bishop with kindness and sweetness. Every one saw that his firmness in matters of duty proceeded from the tenderest charity. True charity, that has sincerely the interests of others at heart, is an essential qualification of Christ's ministers.

Basil was Archbishop of Cesarea in Cappadocia. He was one of the four great Doctors of the Eastern Church. The others are Athanasius, Gregory Nazianzen and John Chrysostom.

Basil was born in the year 329 and died in the year 379. He was an able theologian, an eloquent preacher, and a model bishop. His was a holy family. His father, mother and three of his brothers were canonized saints. One of his brothers was St.

Gregory of Nyssa, sometimes numbered among the four great Doctors of the Eastern Church.

In his 35th year Basil was ordained priest, and seven years afterwards was consecrated Archbishop. His principal efforts during his life were directed towards defending the divinity of Jesus Christ against the Arians.

Another of his great works was the order of Basilian Monks which he founded, the rules of which order were sanctioned by Pope Liberius. Before his death 90,000 monks were following the rule of the order founded by him. Historians of that order claim that it has given to the church 14 popes, 1,800 bishops and 11,000 martyrs. The rule St. Basil gave his monks in the East became the basis of the great Benedictine order of the West.

Besides his work against Arianism, St. Basil wrote "The Creation of the World," "On the Holy Ghost," "On Virginity," "On Morals," "Commentaries on the Bible," Epistles, etc.

In his writings he frequently teaches the necessity of auricular confession of sins, of frequent communion and other Catholic doctrines.

St. Basil was a man of great learning and eloquence, combined with deep humility and piety. He devoted his talents to advance God's greater glory. He gave not only his talents but his earthly treasures to God's church and God's poor, and now enjoys the infinite treasures of heaven.

Fifth Century.

24. Chrysostom, Augustine and Cyril of Alexandria.

Chrysostom was distinguished as an expounder of the Scripture and as an eloquent preacher. Hence the name Chrysostom, which means golden mouth.

St. John Chrysostom was born at Antioch in 347 and died in exile in 407 A. D. At 18 years of age he was practicing law. Shortly after this he was instructed by Bishop Meletius of Antioch, who baptized him and taught him the elements of ecclesiastical science. After some years spent in the study of the Scripture and other necessary branches, John was ordained a priest. In the year 397, he was elected Archbishop of Constantinople. Then his great trials and difficulties began in earnest. He was banished by the cruel emperor, suffered untold hardships, with patience and resignation, and died in banishment after receiving the Holy Sacrament and saying, "Glory be to God for all things."

St. John Chrysostom was a voluminous writer. Perhaps his work on "The Priesthood" is his greatest and best known. In it he speaks of the tremendous Sacrifice of the Mass, of the purity of the priest, of his great power of binding and loosing sins and of the Real presence.

St. Augustine, like St. Paul, was transformed from a great sinner into a great saint. He is a

model of true penitents. He was born at Tagaste, in Africa, in the year 354 and died 430 A. D. His father was a pagan, his mother a Christian. In his youth he had the advantages of all the best teachers of the day. He was a brilliant but wild and wayward youth. His mother, St. Monica, was constantly praying for him.

Her prayers were answered. In 386 she had the unspeakable happiness of witnessing his conversion to the true Church. After this he spent some years in retirement, penance, study and prayer. In the year 390 he was ordained priest and five years afterward was consecrated bishop of Hippo. He discharged the duties of his high office with apostolic zeal and piety.

His writings were numerous and valuable. Among the best known are his "Confessions," "On Free Will," and "On the True Religion," in which he proves that both authority and reason lead us to the Catholic Church, which is the only source of truth, virtue and happiness.

Cyril of Alexandria was born in 376 and died in 444 A. D. In the year 412 he was elected bishop of Alexandria. St. Cyril of Alexandria was especially devoted to the Holy Eucharist and the Blessed Virgin. He wrote several books, of which the principal are, "Against Nestorius," "On the Sacrifice of the Mass," "On Holy Communion," "On the Trinity," and several epistles, in which he requests that

great care be exercised lest anyone die without baptism or the Holy Eucharist or Viaticum.

Such were the great and glorious men whom the church honors as her writers and fathers.

Other great writers of the first five centuries were *Gregory Thaumaturgus*, the great wonder-worker; *Lactantius*, the finished Latin scholar; *Jerome*, the great Scripture student and writer, and *Eusebius*, the church historian. A mere mention of their names will suffice here. Sufficient has been said to show plainly what was the fundamental teachings of the early church.

Quotations from their writings, showing that the teaching of the early church was identical with that of the Catholic Church of to-day, will be found in the chapter on The Teachings of the Early Church.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TEACHINGS OF THE EARLY CHURCH.

FOR three years Our Saviour publicly taught His heavenly doctrine in various parts of Palestine. Some of what He taught was afterwards written by the Evangelists. Much of His teaching has come down to us by tradition; *i. e.*, it was handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation and was finally reduced to writing by the fathers and writers of the early church.

The Great Teacher promised that the Holy Ghost would guide the teaching church in all truth, and that He Himself would abide with her forever. This power has ever preserved the church from error in defining matters of faith and morals.

It is a consolation to the Catholic to know that the fathers of the church 1400, 1500, 1600, 1700 and 1800 years ago taught the same truths we believe to-day. They learned them directly from the mouths of the Apostles and their immediate successors.

In this chapter will be found brief quotations from the Scriptures and from the early fathers showing that the characteristic teachings of the Catholic

Church to-day are the same taught by the early fathers and by Jesus Christ Himself.

The teaching of the church on the Sacrifice of the Mass will be found in the chapter on the Liturgy of the Early Church.

25. The Church and the Bible.

"Going therefore teach ye all nations" (*St. Matthew* XXVIII., 19).

"He that hears you hears Me" (*St. Luke* X., 16).

"No prophecy [or explanation] of Scripture is of private interpretation" (*II. Peter* I., 20).

Jesus Christ established His church to teach all nations. He commanded all to hear her. As He was to abide with her forever she could not teach error. She teaches that the Bible, rightly understood, is the word of God. She alone honors Sacred Scripture. She and she alone made the Canon of the Sacred Scripture.

Not a single book of the New Testament was written until twenty years after Our Lord's ascension. These books were written by different persons, at different times and for different purposes. It was many years before the different parts of the Scripture were known to Christians in general, and many more before their genuineness and authority were decided upon. In the year 397 the Council of Carthage published a canon of Scripture which has been the canon ever since. Canon means rule. By the

"canon" of Scripture is meant the list of books which are to be received as inspired. The Apostles authorized the full list of Old Testament books, including the books of Tobias, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, Machabees and the portions of Esther and Daniel rejected by non-Catholics. Clement of Rome, Polycarp and Tertullian quote them as Scripture.

The canon of the New Testament was not fully settled until the middle of the fourth century.

St. Augustine in his work on the Christian Doctrine says, "Now the entire canon of Scripture is comprised in these books: The five books of Moses: to wit, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; one book of Joshua, the son of Nun; one of Judges; one small tract of Ruth; next the four books of Kings and two of Paralipomenon. These books are a history, which contains a connected account of the times and of the order of the events. There are other books which seem of a different class, and are neither connected with the preceding nor with each other; such are Job, Tobias, Esther, Judith, the two books of Machabees and two of Esdras; next follow the prophetical writings—the Psalms of David, Proverbs, Canticle of Canticles, Ecclesiastes, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus; the rest of the books are properly called prophets, twelve of which are connected with each other: Osee, Joel, Amos, Abdias, Jonas, Micheas, Nahum, Habacuc, Sophonias, Aggeus, Zacharias, Malachy; next the four

prophets who have left volumes of greater length, Isaias, Jeremias, Daniel and Ezechiel. [He included Baruch with Jeremias as others of the ancient fathers did.] In these forty-four [45 with Baruch] books is comprised the authority of the Old Testament." He then gives the list of 27 books of the New Testament. This list of St. Augustine is the Catholic canon of Scripture.

That private interpretation of Scripture is wrong and that the church is the only expounder of the Bible was the belief of the early church, in proof of which we have the words of St. Augustine, "I would not believe the Gospel unless the authority of the Catholic Church moved me to it." (Epistle against the Manichæans.) St. Athanasius says, "All Scripture, old and new, proceeded from Divine inspiration." He gives the canon of Scripture which is identical with the Catholic canon.

These few quotations show that the fathers of the first five centuries believed that the church is guided by the Holy Ghost who resides in her and preserves her from falling into error, that the church alone is the interpreter of Scripture, that the canon of the early church is the Catholic canon of Scripture which contains all the books eliminated by non-Catholics, and that the Bible is the inspired word of God, containing many mysterious doctrines surpassing human understanding which must be made known to us by the church, the infallible guide to heaven.

26. The Sacraments.

The early Christians believed that there were seven sacraments instituted by Jesus Christ by which the merits of His passion were applied to the soul of the recipient. These sacraments are Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders and Matrimony.

Baptism.

The early Christians taught that Baptism was necessary to salvation and that it was necessary for all, infants included. They taught that it remitted sin, actual and original, and that it could not be repeated. "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven" (*John* III., 5). "And Peter said to them, 'Do penance and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins'" (*Acts* II., 38).

Tertullian says on Baptism, "Happy the sacrament of our water, whereby, being cleansed from our former blindness, we are made free unto eternal life."

St. Augustine, writing on Faith, says, "From the child just born, even to the decrepit old man, as none is to be prohibited from Baptism, so none is there who does not die to sin in Baptism; but infants to original sin only, but older persons die

also to all those sins whatsoever, which by living ill they have added to that which they derived from their birth."

Baptism was given either by immersion, pouring or sprinkling. The first of these was most common in the East, while Baptism by pouring or effusion was generally practiced in the West.

Confirmation.

It was the custom of the early church to administer confirmation immediately after Baptism, or as soon as possible. An early writer says, "Seven are the duties of a bishop: to confirm, to bless, to absolve, to hold a synod, to dedicate, to consecrate, to ordain. It is his to confirm, to anoint the foreheads of the baptized faithful with chrism." "Now when the Apostles who were in Jerusalem had heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John, who when they were come, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. For He was not yet come upon any of them; but they were only baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands upon them and they received the Holy Ghost" (*Acts* VIII., 14–17). "After this, having come out of the laver, we are anointed with blessed unction . . . . next to this the hand is laid upon us, through the blessing calling upon and inviting the Holy Spirit" (Tertullian, *Epistle to Smyrna*).

St. Cyprian says in his epistle to Januarius: "Anointed also must he of necessity be, who is baptized, in order that having received the chrism, that is the unction, he may be the anointed of God, and have within him the grace of Christ."

In a similar way does the successor of the Apostles administer Confirmation to-day. The bishop extends his hands over those to be confirmed, prays that they may receive the Holy Ghost and anoints the forehead with chrism in the form of a cross, as did the Christians of the early church and of all ages.

The Holy Eucharist.

To the early Christians, as to the Catholics of all ages, the Sacrament of the Altar is the Body and Blood of Christ.

"And while they were at supper Jesus took bread and blessed and broke and gave to His disciples, and said, 'Take ye and eat, this is My Body;' and taking the chalice He gave thanks and gave to them saying, 'Drink ye all of this, for this is My Blood which shall be shed for the remission of sins'" (*Matthew* XXVI., 28). "Whosoever shall eat of this Bread or drink this Chalice unworthily shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord" (*I. Cor.* XI., 26).

For several centuries the Christians hid the leading mysteries of their religion from the Pagans. This was called "The Discipline of the Secret." Amongst the mysteries thus concealed was the

doctrine of the Holy Eucharist. This accounts for the guarded language used by the early writers when writing of the Holy Eucharist. It .also explains the charges sometimes made by their enemies, that in their meetings infants were killed and their flesh devoured. This referred to the Holy Eucharist—the Body and Blood of Christ. The doctrine of the Real Presence was not explained, except to the baptized, even as late as St. Augustine's time. He says in his tract on John that if catechumens were asked about the reception of the Body and Blood of Christ they would not know what was meant.

St. Augustine also says when asked how often Christians should receive Holy Communion, "Some say daily; some, weekly; but for my part, I would council all to keep peace with the Lord and not receive Him unworthily." And St. Ambrose said, "Let the faithful hear Mass daily and receive the Holy Eucharist every Sunday."

The primitive Christians not only believed that Jesus Christ is really and truly present in the Holy Eucharist, but received Him in Holy Communion frequently. It was only after the lapse of centuries that the church had to pass a law directing her lukewarm children to receive at least three times a year, Christmas, Easter and Pentecost, which law was afterwards modified limiting the number of times the faithful must receive to at least once a year—Easter time.

Good Catholics, at all times, frequently receive their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.

Penance.

Auricular confession as practiced in the Catholic Church was taught by Jesus Christ and practiced by the Christians of the first five centuries. They believed that besides confession, contrition and satisfaction were necessary for the forgiveness of sin.

"Amen I say unto you, whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven" (*Matthew* XVIII., 18). "As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you. When He had said this, He breathed upon them, and He said to them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain they are retained" (*John* XX., 21, 22 *and* 23).

St. John, who is a witness of the practices of the church in the first and second centuries, says in the first chapter of his epistle, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity." St. Cyprian says, "Confession is made with inquiry into the life of him who is doing penance, nor may anyone come to communion, except the hand shall have been imposed on him by the clergy."

St. Ambrose, in his book on Penance, says, "God promised mercy to all and granted His priests permission to loose all without exception." St. Cyprian (*De Lapsis*) says, "Let each confess his sins, and the satisfaction and remission made through the priest are pleasing before the Lord."

St. Athanasius, in his book against the Novatians, says, "He who confesses in penitence, receives through the priest, by the grace of Christ, the remission of his sins." St. Ambrose says, "The poison is sin; confession is the remedy."

The above quotations are sufficient to show clearly that the belief in Penance, a sacrament, including confession, contrition, satisfaction and the priest's absolution, was held by the Christians of the first five centuries and taught by Jesus Christ.

Extreme Unction.

"Is any man sick among you? Let him call in the priests of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he be in sins they shall be forgiven him" (*St. James* v., 14).

The early Christians were as anxious to receive Extreme Unction when necessary as are the Catholics to-day. Origen tells us in his Homily on Leviticus, "Wherein that also is fulfilled which the Apostle James said, 'But if any man be sick among you,'" &c. St. Colman writes in the fifth century,

"When therefore he was about to depart from this life, and to receive the reward of his labors from God, he was weighed down with infirmity of body, and being anointed with the unction of the Sacrament of Oil [Extreme Unction] he fortified his exit by taking the Lord's Body and Blood."

The early Christians believed that the Sacrament of Extreme Unction (so called from the oil used), which is administered to dying persons, strengthens them in their passage from the present to a better life, and they also believed that it was divinely instituted.

Holy Orders.

Primitive Christianity was in harmony with the Catholic Church of all ages in teaching that Holy Orders is a Sacrament by which priests and other ministers of the church are ordained and receive the power to perform their sacred duties; and that bishops alone have the power to ordain.

"As the Father sent Me, I also send you" (*John* xx., 21).

"For this cause I left thee in Crete, that thou should set in order the things that are wanting, and should ordain priests in every city, as I also appointed thee" (*Titus* i., 5).

"The Apostles have preached to us from the Lord Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ, from God. Christ therefore was sent by God, the Apostles by Christ. Preaching through countries and cities, they ap-

pointed their first fruits—having proved them by the spirit—bishops and deacons" (*St. Clement of Rome, I. Epistle to the Corinthians*).

"Let a bishop be ordained by two or three bishops. Let a priest be ordained by one bishop" (*Apostolic Canons*).

The fourth Council of Carthage, in the fourth century, describes the manner of ordination of a bishop, a priest, a deacon and a sub-deacon.

"Bishops have been appointed to rule, and to priests has the Altar been entrusted. But the laity is withheld from the sacred office" (*St. Cyril of Alex.*).

The celibacy of the clergy is a matter of discipline which has come down to us from Apostolic times. St. Jerome says, "The Apostles were either virgins or continent after their election." Their successors, the bishops and priests of the Catholic Church, have been such ever since.

Origen says, "It appears to me, that it belongs to him alone to offer the unceasing sacrifice [of the Mass] who has devoted himself to unceasing and perpetual chastity." The fathers based their belief in the necessity of a celibate clergy on the words of St. Paul, "He that is without a wife is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God."

Matrimony.

The early Christians looked upon Matrimony as one of the seven sacraments or channels, through

which God's grace flows into the soul. It was held by them to be one and indissoluble. "What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder" (*Matt.* XIX., 6). "A woman is bound by the law while her husband lives; but, if her husband dies, she is at liberty; let her marry whom she will" (*I. Cor.* VII., 40).

"How can we find words to describe the happiness of that marriage which the church joins together, the oblation confirms and the blessing seals" (*Tertullian*).

"It is required in this sacrament that the wedlock be not dissolved, and that neither, if divorced, be united to another" (*St. Augustine*).

Thus does antiquity confirm the teaching of the Catholic church that Matrimony is a sacrament, that it is one and indissoluble, and that there is no such a thing as a divorce that will permit, in the sight of God, either party to marry during the lifetime of the other.

27. Sacramentals.

The early church made use of various things, signs and ceremonies in her religious offices. These excite attention, increase devotion, raise the mind to God, through these movements of the heart remit venial sin and are called sacramentals. The most important sacramentals are The Sign of the Cross, Holy Water, Blessed Palms, Oils, Ashes, etc.

The Sign of the Cross.

The primitive Christians began all their actions with the sign of the Cross. It recalls the Passion of Our Saviour. "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ" (*Gal.* VI., 14). "In all our travels," says Tertullian in the second century, "in coming in and in going out, at the table, in lying or sitting down, whatever occupation we are employed in, we mark ourselves with the sign of the cross."

St. Basil alludes to the custom of the Christians of the fourth century, when he says, "Gordius having thus spoken signed himself with the sign of the cross."

Holy Water.

The custom of blessing water for the use of the faithful comes down to us with the weight of antiquity on its shoulders. It is co-eval with the establishment of the church. Pope St. Alexander in the beginning of the second century speaks of it as an established custom.

The blessing of the *Holy Oils* by the bishop on Holy Thursday, of *Palms* by the priest each Palm Sunday, of *Candles* on Candlemas day, feast of the Purification, of *Ashes* on Ash Wednesday, and of various other articles of devotion is as old as Christianity.

The early church, as well as the church of to-day, blessed everything man lawfully used. She blessed

the church in which he worshipped God, she blessed his dwelling, she blessed the food he ate, she blessed his fields, she blessed his body dead and the grave in which his body was laid.

She blessed crosses, medals, everything used to enliven faith. She blessed everything he had. He received them all from God and the church asked God's blessing that all may assist in leading *him to God.*

28. Other Characteristic Catholic Doctrines.

The Catholic doctrines on Purgatory, Indulgences, Invocation of saints, Honoring of relics, Honoring the Blessed Virgin, The Immaculate Conception, The Supremacy and Infallibility of the Pope, were taught by the fathers of the early church.

Purgatory.

"It is therefore a holy and a wholesome thought, to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins" (*II. Mach.* xii., 46). "He that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in the world to come" (*Matt.* xii., 32). "Wherefore also does she pray for his soul" (*Tertullian*).

St. Cyprian, speaking about some martyrs, says, "We always offer sacrifice for them on the anniversary commemoration." St. Augustine tells us in

his Confessions, that his mother, St. Monica, made this request of him, "that you would remember me at the Altar of God."

These quotations show that the early Christians were accustomed to pray and to have the Sacrifice of the Mass offered for the dead. These prayers they knew would be of no benefit to souls in heaven nor in hell. Therefore, they believed in Purgatory.

Indulgences.

The early Christians believed in indulgences. An indulgence, we are taught, is the remission of the temporal punishment due to sin.

"Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven" (*Matt.* XVI., 19). The Council of Nice, in the fourth century says, "As many as in fear, and tears, and patience, and good works, manifest their conversion in deed, and not in appearance, these having completed the appointed time, may communicate in the prayers, and the bishop may determine something more *indulgent* respecting them."

St. Cyprian, St. Augustine and others tell us that in the early church notorious sinners were sentenced to long penances, after being absolved. By sincere sorrow an *indulgence* or remission of some or all of this time or temporal punishment was granted them. This is what is meant by an indulgence.

Invocation of Saints and Angels.

The Archangel Raphael said to Tobias, "When thou didst pray with tears . . . I offered thy prayers to the Lord" (*Tobias* XII., 12). "It is not unfitting to offer up supplications and intercession and thanksgiving to the saints" (*Origen on Prayer*). "Of the holy spiritual powers that have their place in heaven some are called eyes from being entrusted to watch over us; others, ears from receiving our prayers" (*Basil*). "We ought to pray to martyrs, not for them" (*St. Augustine*).

Honoring Relics, Pictures and Images.

The first Christians adored God alone, but they honored relics and images of God's saints. "And when it [the body of the dead man] had touched the bones of Eliseus, the man came to life" (*IV. Kings*). "If I shall touch only the hem of his garment I shall be healed" (*Matt.* IX.). "The very relics of those who live with God are to be honored" (*Ap. Const.*). "It will be a good action on your part to send a martyr's relics to this place" (*Basil*).

"In this place we have made an altar to honor the relics of St. Stephen. Such altars are pleasing to God" (*St. Augustine*).

"They saw them [Peter and Paul] painted together with Him [the Saviour] in many places, for Rome is accustomed to honor the merits of Peter and Paul

on account of their martyrdom being on the same day" (*St. Augustine*).

Honoring the Blessed Virgin.—Her Immaculate Conception.

In honoring the saints the fathers of the early church always gave Mary the place of pre-eminence. With the Christians of all ages they believed that she was exalted above all created beings, that she was the purest and most perfect, the most privileged of beings since she was the immaculate Mother of the immaculate Son of God.

"This Virgin Mother of the Only-begotten Son of God is called Mary, worthy of God, immaculate of the immaculate" (*Origen*).

"Except the holy Virgin Mary, of whom, for the honor of the Lord, I will have no question whatever when sin is concerned" (*St. Augustine*).

The fathers believed that in honoring Mary, the Mother of God, they honored God Himself, and also fulfilled those prophetic words, "For behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed."

The Supremacy and Infallibility of the Pope.

All the early fathers believed that Peter held the first place among the Apostles. Tertullian says he was "the rock upon which the church was built, and that Christ left the keys to him, and through him to the church." Origen calls him "the prince of

the Apostles." Cyprian says Peter was first among the Apostles and held the primacy among them. "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build My church" (*Matt.* XVI). "Feed my lambs . . . Feed my sheep" (*John* XXI., 15).

St. Ambrose clearly expresses his belief in Papal supremacy when he asks the Emperor Gratian not to "permit the Roman Church, the head of the whole Roman world, and that sacred faith of the Apostles to be disturbed." St. Augustine says, "Reckon up the bishops from the very See of Peter . . . That is the rock which the haughty gates of hell do not overcome."

These quotations are sufficient to show that the fathers of the early church not only believed in the primacy and supremacy of Peter and his successors, but also in the infallibility, which was not a declared dogma of faith until recent times.

They believed that the Roman pontiff is the successor of St. Peter, prince of the Apostles; that he is the head of the whole church, supreme pastor of all the flock of Christ; that to him in the person of Peter was given full power of feeding, guiding and governing the universal church; that he is the centre of Catholic unity; and that he is preserved from error when, as head of the church, he teaches the whole church doctrines of *faith and morals.*

CHAPTER V.

THE LITURGY OF THE EARLY CHURCH.

LITURGY is from the Greek λειτον εργον, *leitourgia*, meaning public service. In its wide sense, it means all the rites and ceremonies used in the celebration of Mass, the administration of sacraments, and other services of the church. In its restricted signification it refers to the Sacrifice of the Mass.

29. The Sacrifice of the Mass is the center of Catholic worship. It is a continual renewal of the sacrifice of the cross. In the Sacrifice of the Mass Christ is the sacrificing Priest as He is also the Victim.

The Apostles and their immediate successors assembled for the celebration of Divine service in the houses of the new converts. Some of these were wealthy persons, who gladly threw open their houses to the early Christians. Persecution soon drove them to the caverns, burial places and other secret spots for the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice. The most noted of the secret places are the Roman Catacombs, of which we will speak in another chapter.

St. Luke in the *Acts* (II., 42; XX., 7) and St. Paul in his Epistles (*Col.* IV., 16; *Rom.* XVI., 4; *Eph.* V., 19, *Cor.* X., 16) describe the manner of performing

Divine service in the early church. The soul of the service was the commemoration of the Last Supper, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. In the beginning the celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrifice was simple. We learn, however, from the Apostolic Constitutions that even in primitive times it did not essentially differ from the Mass as celebrated to-day. Few minor changes and additions were made in the first few centuries.

30. The service was divided into two parts, the Mass of the Catechumens and the Mass proper, Missa Catechumenorum and Missa Fidelium. At the Mass of the Catechumens, the unbaptized, and public penitents could be present. At the Mass proper only the baptized were present.

The Mass of the Catechumens began with a recital of psalms corresponding to the psalm and prayers now said by the priest and ministers at the beginning of Mass, before ascending the steps to the altar. Then, as now, he repeated the Kyrie Eleison, *Lord have mercy on us*, a supplication for mercy. The hymn of praise, *Gloria in Excelsis*, followed; after which the celebrant, turning towards the faithful said, "Dominus Vobiscum," "*The Lord be with you*," and then recited certain prayers called the "Collect."

A passage from one of the Epistles or from the Old Testament was next read, a psalm, the Graduale, recited, the Gospel chanted and then explained by the bishop or some priest. After this explanatory sermon, or homily, all the unbelievers and penitents

retired, and the Mass proper began by the "Offertory," or offering of the bread and wine for the sacrifice.

The "Preface" followed, closing with the hymn of the Angels, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts," Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus. Then came the "Canon" the most solemn portion of the Mass, during which occur the Consecration, the elevation of the consecrated species, the Pater Noster, the Agnus Dei, and the distribution of Holy Communion. After prayers of thanksgiving the people were dismissed with the words, "Ite Missa est." "Depart, Mass is over."

Thus we see that the same Holy Sacrifice of the Mass which is celebrated in our churches to-day was solemnized by the fathers of the early church. The essential portion of the Mass has come down to us without change from the Last Supper. Even the rites and ceremonies as we have them to-day come to us from the early church, as Sts. Basil, Chrysostom, Augustine, and others testify.

In the early ages of the church it was permitted to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in private houses. St. Augustine tells us that a certain man named Hesperus wanted one of the priests under his jurisdiction to say Mass in his house for a certain purpose. "A priest went," he says, "and offered up the sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ, fervently beseeching the Lord that the affliction might depart from the household. Through the mercy of God the petition was granted."

31. This chapter is called The Liturgy (*and not the liturgies*) of the Early Church, because all the ancient liturgies agree on the chief doctrines and practices of the Catholic Church, especially on the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

They all teach Prayers for the dead; all contain an account of the institution of the Holy Eucharist; all have the prayer that God will change the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ; all speak of the mystery and sacrifice that are celebrated; all mention the mixture of water and wine in the sacrifice; all use the sign of the cross, and in all may be found the invocation of saints.

The three principal liturgies were those of St. James, St. Mark, and St. Peter, or the Roman liturgy. These liturgies can be traced to the first five centuries of the Christian church, and anyone desiring to be in conformity with the primitive church, can not but be impressed with their uniformity, universality and high authority.

32. The Liturgy of St. James is sometimes called the Liturgy of Jerusalem. In this liturgy, after the priest has said the words of consecration, he continues, "We offer unto Thee, O Lord, this tremendous and unbloody sacrifice, beseeching that Thou deal not with us according to our sins nor reward us according to our iniquities . . . . . *Then the priest breaks the bread, and taking one-half in his right hand and the other in his left, he dips what he holds in his right hand into the chalice and says:*

The union of the most holy Body and of the precious Blood of Our Lord, and God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. *Then he signs what he holds in his left hand, then the other half and immediately begins to break and to distribute a part into each cup, saying:* The union is made and sanctified and perfected in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. . . . Taste and see how gracious the Lord is, Who is broken and not divided, is given to the faithful and not consumed for the remission of sins, and for everlasting life, now and ever, to eternal ages. . . . . O Lord, our God, the heavenly Bread, the Life of the world, I have sinned against heaven and before Thee, and am not worthy to partake of Thy immaculate mysteries; but as Thou art a merciful God make me worthy by Thy grace to partake without condemnation of Thy holy Body and precious Blood for the remission of my sins and eternal life."

This liturgy is used in the Syriac language by the Monophysite heretics. Substantially the same liturgy is used at Jerusalem by the Melchites, who are orthodox Catholics.

The Monophysite heresy was condemned in 451 by the Council of Chalcedon. Hence we see the antiquity of this liturgy, or at least of the parts of it used in common by the Monophysite heretics and the orthodox Catholics.

33. The Liturgy of St. Mark is also called the Liturgy of Alexandria, because St. Mark was the

first bishop of that ancient see. That this liturgy has come down to us from the first centuries of the church we have as strong proof as we have for the antiquity of St. James' liturgy. The Liturgy of St. Mark is used by the Monophysites of the patriarchate of Alexandria.

The words of institution and consecration are almost the same in all the liturgies. In this liturgy we read, "Our Lord Himself, and God, and supreme King, Jesus Christ, in the night wherein He delivered Himself for our sins and underwent death in the flesh for all men, reclining with His disciples He took bread with His holy and spotless and undefiled hands, looking up to Thee His own Father, but our God, and the God of all, He gave thanks, blessed, sanctified, broke and gave to His holy and blessed apostles and disciples, saying, 'Take, eat, for this is my Body which is broken for us and distributed for the remission of sins.' *People:* Amen. In like manner after He had supped, having taken the chalice and mixing the wine and water, and looking up to heaven He gave thanks, He blessed, He filled it with the Holy Ghost, and gave to His holy and blessed disciples saying, Drink ye all of it. For this is My Blood of the New Testament, which is shed and distributed for you and for many for the remission of sins. Do this in commemoration of Me, for as often as you shall eat this Bread and drink this Chalice, ye show forth My death. . . . . Send down also upon us, and upon these loaves and

these cups, Thy Holy Spirit, that He may sanctify and consecrate them, as an Almighty God, and make the bread indeed the Body, and the chalice the Blood of Our Lord Himself, and God, and Saviour and supreme King, Jesus Christ." When communicating the clergy he says, "The holy Body and at the chalice the precious Blood of Our Lord and God and Saviour."

Besides these two liturgies there were various others used in the East. The only ones at present used in the Eastern Church are those of St. Basil and St. John Chrysostom.

34. The Liturgy of St. Peter, or the Roman liturgy, is of apostolic origin, derived from St. Peter. It was first used at Antioch, afterwards at Rome. It is the liturgy of the Western or Latin church. The other so-called liturgies—the Ambrosian, used only in Milan, the Mozarabic, used in Toledo, Spain, the Gallican, the Lyonnese, and the liturgy of Theodorus—are either derived from the Roman or are conformable to it. A manuscript from the Royal library of Sweden shows this liturgy as it was in the time of Pope Gelasius, in 492 A. D. The works of St. Leo contain a sacramentary which was used in St. Leo's time, about the year 440. This sacramentary and the liturgy agree in all essential particulars, thus proving the antiquity of St. Peter's liturgy.

In this liturgy we find in the canon: "Wherefore, O Lord, we beseech Thee, vouchsafe to make

in all respects, blessed, approved, ratified, reasonable, and acceptable, that it may be made unto us the Body and Blood of Thy most beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ. *After the consecration the priest says:* Wherefore, O Lord, we, Thy servants, offer unto Thy glorious Majesty of Thy gifts and presents, a pure host, the holy Bread of eternal life, and the Chalice of everlasting salvation. Upon which vouchsafe to look with a propitious and serene countenance and to accept them as Thou didst vouchsafe to accept the gifts of Thy just servant, Abel, and the sacrifice of the patriarch, Abraham, and that which Thy high priest, Melchisedech, offered to Thee, a holy sacrifice, an immaculate host. . . . May this commixture and consecration of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ be to us that receive, unto eternal life. . . . . *Bowing to the Holy Sacrament the priest says:* Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of world, have mercy on us. . . . Let not the participation of Thy Body, O Lord Jesus Christ, which I, though unworthy, presume to receive, be to my judgment and condemnation, but through Thy mercy may it be available to me for the safeguard and cure of mind and body. *At the communion the priest says thrice:* Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof, but speak the word only, and my soul shall be healed." And in giving Holy Communion, as in receiving it himself, the priest again says it is "the Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ."

In the liturgy of the Nestorians, heretics, who left the church in the fifth century, we find the belief in the Real Presence, Transubstantiation, the Mass and other Catholic doctrines.

From this brief examination of the various liturgies of the early church, we see that all agree in proving the antiquity of many Catholic doctrines, especially the institution of the Blessed Sacrament, the Real Presence, Transubstantiation, and the Sacrifice of the Mass.

35. For Liturgy guides us to a knowledge of what the church teaches. Doctrine can be deduced from prayers and ceremonies.

Pope St. Celestine, in 431, laid down this principle when he said, "the law guiding our prayers affords a rule for our belief." "*Legem credendi lex statuit supplicandi.*"

CHAPTER VI.

THE ROMAN CATACOMBS AND THE EARLY CHURCH.

THE Roman catacombs furnish strong proof of the identity of the Catholic Church and the church of the first five centuries.

The catacombs (*κατά, downward,* and *κύμβος, a hollow vessel*) are underground burial places. We are told that the ancient Egyptians buried their dead in subterranean tombs. There are catacombs around Paris, Naples and other places, which have been used as cemeteries.

36. There are said to be sixty different catacombs around Rome within a circuit of about three miles from the walls. More than twenty-five of these have been carefully examined. Each catacomb is a network of passages running in various directions. These passages are fifteen feet or more below the surface of the earth, are from three to five feet wide, and seven or eight feet high, and on either side are a number of horizontal shelves.

These shelves serve as tombs for thousands of the early Christians. Each of these graves is covered with a slab of stone or some other material on which is often inscribed the name of the deceased and some Christian emblem.

Sometimes there is a widening of the passage to such an extent as to form a good-sized room. These rooms were used for the purpose of religious instruction and the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice in times of persecution.

Some of these underground burial places have two or three, or more, stories connected by stairways. The entire length of these underground passages is nearly six hundred miles. About 6,000,000 bodies have been interred in them.

37. Many of these catacombs had their origin in remote antiquity. Some of them can be traced back to the times of Romulus and Remus. Although cremation was common among the Pagans, they sometimes buried their dead in underground cemeteries.

It was formerly believed that the catacombs were sand pits in which the Christians took refuge for concealment. But, through the efforts of the renowned De Rossi and others, it has been conclusively demonstrated that these excavations were made solely for the purpose of burying the dead.

The Christian inscriptions found in them sufficiently prove this. During the first five centuries of Christianity the catacombs were used as Christian cemeteries. Dr. Northcote, and others, tell us that there are inscriptions in them from the year of Our Lord 72 down to the year 410.

These were centuries of persecution. In the burial of the dead, as in their other services, the Christians

were compelled to withdraw, as much as possible, from public observation. In these underground chapels, they could pray at the tombs of their relatives, and have the Holy Sacrifice offered up on altars, hewn out of the rocks, without fear of interruption.

The Roman government did not at first disturb these Christian burial places. It was not until the third century, when they became convinced that these cemeteries were being used by the Christians for the purpose of religious worship, that the Roman authorities interfered with the catacombs.

38. Beginning with the third century the history of the catacombs is a story of bloodshed. Persecution now became fierce and the Christians were attacked in the catacombs, whither they had fled to worship God when the public exercise of their religion was not permitted.

The Emperor Valerian forbade them "to hold assemblies or to enter those places which they called cemeteries." The Christians did not obey this unjust decree. During the religious services in the catacomb of Pretextatus, near that of St. Callixtus, Pope Sixtus II. and some of his deacons were surprised and martyred. Many of the faithful who were present offered themselves to be martyred in place of their holy pontiff.

The Pagans destroyed the stairways, blocked up the passages and endeavored to prevent the Christians from again using the catacombs. But the Christians devised new ways of entrance and exit, and thus defeated the plans of their persecutors.

During these persecutions many martyrs perished in the catacombs. When peace was restored they became places of pilgrimage. Thousands crowded to them to honor the sacred relics of the martyrs. Pope St. Damasus and other bishops of Rome made new stairways and other improvements, to accomodate the pious pilgrims.

Pope Damasus composed verses in honor of many of the martyrs, which have been engraved on marble and have been of great service in constructing the history of these cemeteries.

In the year 410 Rome was taken by Alaric. This year also put an end to the use of the Roman catacombs as burial places. A few, perhaps, were, from time to time, buried there to the end of the fifth century. They continued to be looked upon as holy places containing the relics of the martyrs, and consecrated by the shedding of their blood, and, as such, were visited by thousands of pious pilgrims.

The Lombards plundered and partially destroyed the catacombs in the eighth century. In the ninth, many of the relics of the martyrs were removed from the catacombs to the various churches in Rome. This was done because the pope could not sufficiently protect these sacred relics, scattered in so many cemeteries all around the city.

These places now began to be neglected. During the next 600 years they were almost forgotten. In 1578 certain laborers happened to dig into some graves ornamented with Christian paintings and

Greek and Latin inscriptions. "Rome was amazed." The learned flocked to see the wonderful discovery. Nothing much was done until 1593, when Antonio Bosio, a noted scholar of the time, made many important explorations and discoveries. Almost three centuries of obscurity followed. The Jesuit Father Marchi and his renowned pupil, Giovanni De Rossi, in the present century, have completely reconstructed the history of the catacombs. For more than a third of a century De Rossi spent his money, time and talents in the great labor of exploring the catacombs. He has published a learned work in three volumes embodying his principal researches.

39. The Roman catacombs furnish many proofs that the teachings and practices of the Catholic Church of to-day are the same as those of primitive Christianity.

The catacombs furnish abundant proof that the early church believed in honoring sacred pictures and images, in revering the Blessed Virgin, in a sacramental system, and in praying to the saints as well as for the dead.

In spite of the corroding hand of time, the lapse of fifteen centuries has failed to destroy all of the Christian art which adorned the walls and ceilings of the catacombs. Sufficient remains to show that the Christians of the primitive church understood the proper use of sacred pictures and images. They used them to enliven their faith. While they adored God alone they honored the images of the Saviour,

His Blessed Mother and the saints, because by these images they were reminded of the originals. They also used them to beautify those underground chapels which in time of persecution were their only places of worship.

The catacombs are an ancient Christian art gallery. The Christian artists of the first and succeeding centuries used many Biblical and symbolical subjects in their paintings. De Rossi, Northcote and others insist upon the superiority of the paintings of the first and second over those of the third and fourth centuries.

40. One of the most ancient paintings in the catacombs is a representation of a vine trailing over the whole roof of the vaulted passage. It is a symbol of Our Lord, Who often spoke of Himself under the image of a vine.

One of the most endearing of the many titles which Our Lord used when speaking of Himself is that of The Good Shepherd. The first Christians delighted to keep this image always before them. They scratched it on tombstones, carved it on chalices, and painted it on the ceilings of the underground chapels. The Good Shepherd is more frequently represented in the paintings in the catacombs than any other subject.

The resurrection is represented by pictures of Jonas, Lazarus, Daniel in the lion's den, and the three children in the fiery furnace.

Pictures may also be seen of an anchor, the emblem of hope, of a dove, the symbol of innocence,

and of a sheep, the representative of a disciple of Christ.

The picture of a fish frequently occurs in these paintings. As the dove is used to represent the Holy Ghost, so the fish is used to represent Jesus, the Saviour. The Greek word ιχθυς means fish. The five letters forming this Greek word are the initials of the five words in Greek that mean Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour.

The various paintings of Mary in the catacombs, show the great love and reverence the primitive Christians had for Mary the Mother of God.

Some of these paintings represent her with the Infant Jesus in her arms, and Isaias, who prophesied that Jesus would be born of a virgin, standing near her; in others is represented the adoration of the Magi. These holy kings are represented presenting their gifts to the Infant Jesus, seated on His Mother's knee.

Paintings referring to the various sacraments, especially Baptism and Holy Eucharist, are to be found in the different catacombs. Moses striking the rock, from which water bursts forth, is a figure of baptism: St. Paul tells us "the rock is Christ." The water that flowed from it is the stream of Divine grace first given by the waters of baptism. There is also a painting representing a man administering the sacrament of baptism.

There is a painting representing a priest in the act of consecrating the Holy Eucharist. Another

painting represents the Apostles at the Eucharistic banquet, partaking of the Blessed Sacrament.

Various other paintings, representing biblical or symbolical subjects, are scattered through the catacombs.

Even non-Catholic writers admit that from the very beginning the Christians ornamented their underground chapels with paintings.

41. The learned archaeologist De Rossi has made a collection of the Christian inscriptions of the first five or six centuries. Of these, one belongs to the first century, two to the second, twenty to the third, and five hundred to each of the next two centuries.

These ancient inscriptions on the Christian tombstones usually contained the name of the deceased, to which was sometimes added the Christian salutation "Pax tecum," "*Peace be with thee,*" or "Vivas in Deo," "*May you live in God.*"

These inscriptions often ask for the departed soul rest, and light, and peace in God. Sometimes they invoke the help of the Martyr's prayers for the surviving relatives.

Here are some of the inscriptions: "Pax tecum, Urania—*Peace with thee, Urania.*" "Susanna, Vivas in Deo—*Susanna, mayest thou live in God.*" "Pete pro parentes tuos, Matronata Matrona, Quæ vixit An. I., Di. LIII—*Pray for your parents Matronata, Matrona, who lived one year, fifty-three days.*" "Vivas in pace et pete pro nobis—*Mayest thou live in peace and pray for us.*"

These few selections are sufficient to show the nature of the inscriptions in the catacombs. De Rossi published a collection of all the Christian inscriptions to be found in the catacombs. In this collection there are 11,000 inscriptions.

Some of them, *e.g.*, "Pete pro parentes tuos," are not consonant with the rules of grammar.

42. The most famous of the catacombs is the "Cemetery of St. Callixtus," along the Appian Way, which contains the crypt, or vault, of St. Cecilia, of Pope Eusebius, who suffered martyrdom in 310, and the tombs of thousands of martyrs. Other important catacombs are those of Sts. Nereus and Achilles, Pretextatus and the Ostrian, or Cemeterium Ostrianum.

It is not strange that these underground cemeteries have always attracted the attention of Christians. Their exploration is interesting; their history, instructive. From their exploration by learned antiquarians and archaeologists, we learn much about the lives and teaching of the martyrs, popes and other teachers of the Early Church.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CREEDS OF THE EARLY CHURCH.

A CREED is a brief and exact statement of the chief things to be believed. It is a summary of the principal articles of faith.

Creed is from the Latin word *Credo*—the word with which the creeds begin. The chief doctrines of religion are found in the creeds.

The creeds of the early church were the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Constantinopolitan Creed, and the Athanasian Creed.

43. The Apostles' Creed.

The Apostles' Creed is a list of the truths taught by the Apostles. Our Lord commissioned His Apostles to teach all nations. Before separating to fulfil this command they drew up a summary of the chief truths they were to teach.

There are twelve parts or articles in the Apostles' Creed. Each of these articles or parts is intended to refute some false doctrine taught before or during the time of the Apostles.

The Romans, for example, taught that there were many Gods; others said that the devil and not God created the world; others taught various errors. All these errors are refuted and the truth inculcated by the Apostles' Creed.

The following is the Apostles' Creed: "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost; born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell; the third day he arose from the dead; He ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the Holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and life everlasting. Amen."

This creed contains the chief mysteries of religion and other truths of faith. The important truths contained in this creed are that God exists, that He will reward the good and punish the evil, that there are three persons in God, that the Son of God became man for our salvation, and that the soul of man will live forever.

The mysteries which it teaches are, the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation, Death and Resurrection of Our Lord.

We learn from the Acts of the Apostles that persons were questioned concerning their faith before baptism. Philip said to the Eunuch who wished to be baptized, "If thou believest with thy whole heart thou mayest." And he answering said: "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

Thus, even in Apostolic times, a profession of faith was required before baptism.

Irenæus, Tertullian, and Gregory Thaumaturgus used a form identical, or almost identical, with our Apostles' Creed. Even if the Apostles, before separating to convert the world, did not compose this creed, it deserves the name of Apostles' Creed because it is an extension of the form used in baptism in Apostolic times, and it is a summary of Apostolic teaching.

44. *The Nicene Creed* is so called because it is the formula drawn up at the first general council of the church at Nice, in the year 325. This profession of faith was based on the Apostles' Creed. Arius had denied the Divinity of Jesus Christ. Hence this profession of faith declared in the name of the Holy Ghost that the Son "was *true* God, born of God, not made, and *consubstantial* with the Father [ὁμοούσιος, *consubstantialis*, that is, *co-eternal and equal in majesty with the Father*], and let no one presume to assert that He is created or changeable or variable."

The following is the Nicene Creed: "We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all

things, visible and invisible, and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, only begotten from the Father, i. e., from the substance of the Father; God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, consubstantial with the Father, through whom all things came into being, both the things in heaven and the things in earth; who for us men and for our salvation came down and was made flesh, became man, suffered, and rose again on the third day and ascended into heaven, and is to come to judge the living and the dead. And in the Holy Ghost."

It is said that St. Athanasius drew up this creed.

45. *The Constantinopolitan Creed*, drawn up at the second general council at Constantinople, is almost identical with the Nicene. The principal difference was the addition of "The Lord and life-giver who proceedeth from the Father and the Son" after "and in the Holy Ghost."

The Divinity of the Holy Ghost had been denied, and this council was convened to condemn that heresy and define the true doctrine concerning the Holy Ghost. This creed, or more properly the creed of Nice and Constantinople, with the addition of "Filioque," is said in the Mass every Sunday. It is as follows: "I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things, visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, and born of the Father before all ages; God of God,

light of light, true God of true God, begotten not made, consubstantial with the Father, by whom all things are made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and became incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, *and was made* Man. He was crucified also for us, suffered under Pontius Pilate, and was buried. And the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven; sitteth at the right hand of the Father; and He is to come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, of whose kingdom there shall be no end. And in the Holy Ghost, Lord, giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who together with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified; who spoke by the prophets. And in one, holy, Catholic and Apostolic church. I confess one Baptism for the remission of sins. And I expect the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen."

46. As will readily be seen this creed is in perfect agreement with the Nicene, and both are founded on the Apostles' Creed. This creed has been said in the Catholic Church every Sunday since the fifth century with the exception of the words "Filioque." The words mean "*from the Son*" in the formula "*proceedeth from the Father and the Son.*" The words "Filioque" were not added by the church until the ninth century. They were introduced by the pope as universal teacher of the church. They

are not an addition to, but an explanation of the creed.

Ever since the time of Photius, in the ninth century, the words "Filioque" have been the cause of controversy between the East and the West. They were the cause of the Greek schism. It is not necessary for us to say more about these words here. We use them on the authority of Christ's representative, and that suffices.

47. *The Athanasian Creed*, or, as it is sometimes called from its first words, Quicumque Vult, is said to be the work of St. Athanasius. Some deny this. But whether Athanasius was the author or not, its teaching is Athanasian.

This creed brings out clearly the Catholic teaching on the Incarnation, the Holy Trinity, and the necessity of believing all the church teaches. It certainly comes down to us from the fifth century, if not from an earlier date. It has been used in the Breviary since the ninth century. The Utrecht Psalter, an ancient copy of this creed in Holland, has been proved to be at least 1200 or 1300 years old. Hence, the great antiquity of the Athanasian Creed is beyond dispute.

According to this creed; Whoever wishes to be saved must, above all things, hold the Catholic Faith. Unless a person observes this faith entire and pure, without doubt he will perish forever. But this Catholic Faith is, that we worship one God in three persons and Trinity in unity; neither con-

founding the persons nor separating the substance. For the Father is one person, the Son is another, and the Holy Ghost another. But the Divinity of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost is one, the glory is equal, and the Majesty is co-eternal. Such as is the Father, so is the Son, and so also is the Holy Ghost.

The Father is uncreated, the Son is uncreated, the Holy Ghost is uncreated.

The Father is immense, the Son is immense, the Holy Ghost is immense.

The Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, the Holy Ghost is eternal. Still there are not three eternals, but one Eternal, as there are not three uncreated nor three immense, but one Uncreated and one Immense.

The Father is omnipotent, the Son omnipotent, the Holy Ghost omnipotent, still there are not three omnipotents but one Omnipotent.

The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Ghost is God; and there are not three gods, but God is one.

The Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, the Holy Ghost is Lord; still there are not three but one Lord.

As Christian truth teaches that each of the persons singly is Lord and God, so the Catholic religion prohibits us to say that there are three gods or three lords.

The Father was made by no one; He was neither created nor begotten.

The Son is from the Father alone, not made, nor created, but begotten.

The Holy Ghost is from the Father and the Son, not made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.

There is, therefore, one Father, not three; one Son, not three; one Holy Ghost and not three.

And in this Trinity there is nothing before or after, nothing greater or less; but all three persons are co-eternal and co-equal.

So above all things, as was said before, Unity is to be venerated in Trinity and Trinity in Unity. Therefore, he who wishes to be saved must believe thus concerning the Trinity.

But it is also necessary for eternal salvation that a person firmly believe in the Incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

The right faith, therefore, is that we believe and confess that Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is also the Son of man, He is God, begotten before all time of the substance of the Father, and man born in time of the substance of His Mother. Perfect God, He is also perfect man with a rational soul and human flesh. Equal to the Father on account of His Divinity, He is less than the Father on account of His humanity.

Although God and man, He is not two but one Christ, not one by conversion of the Divinity into flesh, but by God's assuming human nature; not one by confusion of substance, but by the unity of person. For as the rational soul and body is one man, so God and man is one Christ, who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, the third day

He arose from the dead. He ascended into heaven, sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty, thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. At His coming all men must arise with their bodies to render an account of their actions. The good will go to eternal life, the bad into eternal fire.

This is the Catholic faith which everyone must faithfully and truly believe, otherwise he cannot be saved.

The above is a free translation of the Athanasian Creed as contained in the Catholic Breviary. It is frequently repeated by every Catholic priest during the recitation of the Divine Office. It contains a list of things believed by the early church. It is one of the creeds we received from antiquity, and contains doctrines believed by the true church of God in every age and in every clime.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE COUNCILS OF THE EARLY CHURCH.

THE fifteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles furnishes us the first example of a council. A disagreement arose about the necessity of circumcision. Some taught that salvation depended upon it. Sts. Paul and Barnabas denied its necessity. It was determined to bring the matter before the Apostles and disciples for a decision.

48. The Apostles and ancients assembled at Jerusalem in the year 51 and, after much discussion, Peter, the head of the Apostolic college, arose and decided the controversy against those clamoring for circumcision.

In giving their decisions the fathers of this first council of the Christian Church wrote a letter to those guilty of wrong doing and heretical teachings in which they said, "It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us." This language shows that the council was held in consequence of a Divine Commission. Later Councils use similar language.

This Apostolic Council served as a model for succeeding councils. There are various kinds of councils. *Ecumenical* or *general* councils are those to which bishops of the whole world are convoked,

are presided over by the Pope, or his legates, and whose decrees, after being confirmed by the Pope, are binding on all Christians.

National councils represent a whole nation, as the last plenary council of Baltimore.

Provincial councils, or synods, are assemblies of the clergy of a diocese presided over by the bishop or vicar general.

The first of these classes will be considered here. During the first five centuries there were four general or ecumenical councils, those of Nice in 325, Constantinople in 381, Ephesus in 431, and Chalcedon in 451.

49. *The Council of Nice* met in the year 325. St. Athanasius tells us there were 318 bishops present, mostly from the East. The Pope was represented by three legates, the bishop Hosius and the two priests Vitus and Vincentius.

Hosius presided in the name of the Pope. This council was convened by Pope Sylvester and the Emperor Constantine to examine Arianism. Arius was a learned priest of Alexandria who denied the Divinity of Jesus Christ. His heresy is treated more fully in another chapter.

Alexander, bishop of Alexandria, and his deacon Athanasius, who soon after succeeded him, were among those who took the principal part in the proceedings. About 20 Arian bishops were present.

The Arian party presented a creed of their own, drawn up by one of their bishops, Eusebius of Cesarea. They evaded the main point at issue.

The question to be decided was, whether Our Lord was God in as full a sense as the Father; or whether He was a creature. The Arians said He was a creature; the Catholics said He was God.

The Catholic party drew up a creed which condemned the Arian heresy and in which was inserted the proper word "Homoousion," consubstantial, showing that the Son is of the same nature as the Father.

This Nicene Creed will be found among the Creeds of the Early Church. Arianism soon met the fate of all heresies. It was cut up into many sects.

The Council of Nice passed 20 canons or laws. Of these, perhaps, the most important was the one which declares "that the Primacy, and chief honor, according to the Canons, be preserved to the Archbishop of ancient Rome."

50. *The Council of Constantinople* in 381 is the second general council. It was convened to take action against Macedonius and Apollinaris, the former of whom denied the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, the latter said, Christ took from Mary a body but not a soul.

This council was convened by the Emperor Theodosius, and, only the bishops of the East being invited, was not ecumenical at first; but its acts and decrees were confirmed by the Pope and this gave it the character of a general council.

Besides the condemnation of the heresies of Macedonius and Apollinaris, the most important

act of this council was the addition, by way of explanation, of several clauses to the Nicene Creed, thus forming the Constantinopolitan Creed—the creed of the Roman Missal.

To the clause "maker of all things visible and invisible" was added "of heaven and earth," against the Manicheans, who taught the doctrine of two principles. Photinus said the Word was not eternal. To combat this error was added "born before all ages."

On account of the heresy of Apollinaris these words were inserted "by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary." Against the heresy of Macedonius concerning the Holy Ghost was inserted the passage "the Lord and life giver."

The creed drawn up by this Council is the Credo said every Sunday in the Mass. It is sometimes called the Nicene, sometimes the Constantinopolitan Creed. Both are practically the same. The Creed of Constantinople but explains and completes the Nicene Creed.

51. *The Third General Council* was held at Ephesus in the year 431. Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople, had denied that Mary is Mother of God. He said that "in Christ were two entirely independent elements; that the Divine element belonged only to Logos, and the human element to the man Jesus." And, said he, "Let no one designate the Blessed Virgin as 'Mother of God.'"

Everywhere, especially in the East, great controversies arose concerning this title. Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria, tried to put an end to these controversies by a pastoral letter in which he said: "As the mother of man is mother, not simply of his body but his whole person, notwithstanding that his soul comes from another source—as she gives birth not only to the body of man, but to the whole complex individual, composed essentially of a true union of body and soul; so also the Blessed Virgin Mary, who, although she did not in any sense, give birth to the Divinity, by which the Word is equal to the Father, is, nevertheless, truly and really Mother of the Word, because the flesh of the Word was formed in her womb, and she brought into the world the Person of the Eternal Word, who was clothed with our nature."

Nestorius paid no attention to the arguments of Cyril.

Finally, with the consent of Pope Celestine, the Emperor Theodosius II, convoked the council. Cyril of Alexandria presided as Papal representative during the sessions of this council until the arrival of the Pope's legates, Arcadius, Projectus and Philip.

In his instructions to his legates Pope Celestine said: "You will in all things consult our brother, the bishop Cyril (who had already been made Papal legate), and you will perform whatever you see to be in his power to decide; and we command that the

authority of the Holy See be respected. For the instructions, which you have received, tell you that you must be present at the council; if they come to a disputation you must judge among their opinions, and not undergo a struggle."

In his letter to the bishops at the council the Pope said: "On account of our solicitude, we have sent to you our brother priests, the bishops, Arcadius and Projectus, and the priest Philip, who are of one mind with ourselves and who will execute what we have established."

The council, which was approved by the Pope, after condemning the doctrine of Nestorius, agreed upon the following profession of faith: "As to the Virgin Mary, Mother of God, and the mode of the Incarnation, we are obliged to say that we think of them—not as if we would add anything to the Nicene Creed, or pretend to explain mysteries which are ineffable, but to stop the mouths of those who wish to attack us.

"We declare then, that Our Lord, Jesus Christ, is the only Son of God, perfect God and perfect man, composed of a reasonable soul and a body; in respect of His God-head begotten of the Father before all ages, and the same, according to the humanity, born in these latter days, for our salvation of the Virgin Mary; in respect of His God-head consubstantial with the Father, and the same consubstantial with us, according to the humanity, for the two natures have been united, and therefore

we confess one Christ, one Son, one Lord. In consistence with the notion of this union, without confusion, we confess that the Blessed Virgin is *Mother of God*, because God the Word was incarnate and made man, and from the very act of conception united to Himself the temple which He took from her."

52. *The Fourth General Council* was held at Chalcedon in the year 451. It was convoked by the order of Pope Leo the Great and the Emperor Marcian for the purpose of condemning Eutychianism.

Eutyches, abbot of a monastery in Constantinople, said, that after the union of the two natures in Jesus Christ there was but one nature, and that consequently the Deity suffered and was crucified.

This error spread rapidly, and the council was convened to counteract its influence. The pope's legates were the bishops Paschasinus, Julian and Lucentius, and the priests, Boniface and Basil. Nearly six hundred bishops were present.

In his letter of instruction to one of his legates Pope Leo says: "I have written to our brother, Bishop Flavian, sufficient for you and the universal church to learn the ancient and singular faith which the ignorant opponent (Eutyches) has attacked, that which we hold as divinely delivered, and which we undeviatingly preach." When the letter to Flavian mentioned above was read in the council all the bishops said, "Peter has spoken through Leo."

A profession of faith was drawn up by the council against the errors of Eutychianism and Nestorianism, both of which were heresies against the Incarnation. The profession of faith of the Council of Chalcedon is as follows: "Following, therefore, the Holy Fathers, we all, with one voice declare that we ought to acknowledge one and the same Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in God-head and perfect in manhood, truly God and truly man; the same composed of a reasonable soul and body; consubstantial with the Father in respect of the God-head, and consubstantial with us in respect of the manhood; like unto us in all things, yet without sin; begotten of the Father before all ages, in respect of the God-head, and the same in these last days, born of Mary, the Virgin, Mother of God, in respect of the manhood for our sake and for our salvation; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, in two natures, without confusion, change, division, separation; the difference of the natures being in nowise taken away by the union; on the contrary, the property of each is preserved, and concurs into one Person and one Hypostasis; so that He is not parted nor divided into two persons, but He one and the same, is Son and Only-begotten, God the Word, Our Lord Jesus Christ."

53. From this brief review of the Four General Councils of the early church we see, that all of them were convoked or approved by the Pope; that they were convened to define some doctrine already

believed by the faithful, but called in question by some heretic; that when the decision was given it was considered final by the faithful; and, that the bishops of the primitive church always considered the teachings of the Pope, the Bishop of Rome, authoritative. "Peter has spoken through Leo."

CHAPTER IX.

THE TRIALS OF THE EARLY CHURCH.

THE life of the church, like that of her Divine Founder, has been an almost uninterrupted series of troubles and trials. She, too, has had her good Fridays, her Calvaries without number. This her Founder had foretold, "The world shall hate and persecute you." Especially is this true of the early church. The trials of the early church were *internal* and *external.*

I.

54. *The internal trials of the early church* were the countless heresies that sprung up in the very beginning. St. Paul, in his epistle to the Galatians, includes "heresies" among the most grievous sins, and St. Peter speaks of false teachers bringing "heresies of perdition." Ignatius, Tertullian and other fathers of the early church use the word as a term of reproach and apply it to those who choose false doctrines or institute sects among themselves.

55. *Gnosticism* is the first heresy of any importance that arose in the Christian Church. It flourished in the first and second centuries after Christ. It

was composed of a number of sects differing from each other in some respects.

Gnosticism, from the Greek *gnosis, knowing,* literally means knowledge. But the Gnostics arrogated to themselves a superior knowledge, independent of, and superior to faith. Faith, according to them, was for the many, knowledge for the few.

They abandoned faith, ridiculed the ministers of God, denied the teaching of creation out of nothing, doubted the resurrection of the body, and set at naught the efficacy and necessity of baptism. They believed that all things, material and spiritual, were derived from the Deity by successive emanations or eons, and that the Saviour was but a superior eon. To the Gnostic, knowledge was the passport to heaven.

Simon Magus was the first Gnostic. By some diabolical power he succeeded in deceiving the first citizens of Rome. While attempting to show his claim to divine power by flying in the air, he was shown to be an impostor, when the prayers of St. Peter caused him to fall and perish miserably. Simon tried to purchase the gifts of the Holy Ghost. From this comes the word "Simony."

Menander was a disciple of Simon Magus. He claimed to be a saviour of men.

Saturnine, a disciple of Menander, taught his errors at Antioch in the beginning of the second century.

All three of these heretics taught that the world

was made by inferior powers antagonistic to the Supreme Being. Simon Magus has been called the father of all heresies.

Cerinthus, a heretic of this time, taught, among other errors, that the Word did not take upon Himself a human nature. In this his heresy agreed with that of Simon Magus. He also taught that the Old Law was as binding as the New. He was a contemporary of St. John. The Gnostics derived most of their erroneous teachings from Paganism.

The Ebionites were a sect of heretics, whose false teachings were derived from Judaism. They acknowledged the divine mission of the Saviour, but contended that He was *only man.*

The Ebionites were formed principally from the converted Essenes and Pharisees, two ascetic sects of the Jews, who held that the Jewish law was still binding on the Christians.

The Ebionite heresy flourished during the first four centuries of the church. In the fifth century it almost entirely disappeared. Ebionite means "poor," and that name was probably adopted to vindicate their renunciation of earthly things.

The Docetæ, from *δοκεῖν, to seem,* denied that Jesus Christ was true man. They attributed to Him an apparent but not a real humanity. Their heresy was just the opposite to that of the Ebionites.

All of these heresies, the Cerinthians, the Ebionites and the Docetæ, were more or less tinctured with Gnosticism.

56. These heresies were ably combated by St. Peter, St. John, St. Paul, St. Clement, St. Irenæus and other writers and fathers of the primitive church. The beloved Disciple was especially conspicuous in his opposition. He was destined by the Almighty to evangelize those very places where these heretics were doing most harm. He not only refuted them by preaching but also by writing. His sublime Gospel is a refutation of their errors. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him . . . . And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us."

These words of St. John's Gospel show that the Word, or Son of God, was not purely human, as the Ebionites said, nor inferior to the Supreme Being, as the Cerinthians contended, but that He was God equal to His Father from all eternity, and assumed human nature at the time of His Incarnation.

John's teachings and labors were specially blessed by God. Long after he had passed to his eternal reward his zealous disciples, Ignatius, Polycarp and others, carefully guarded and defended the faith against the assaults of heretics.

57. *The Montanists* were the principal heretics of the second century. The great Tertullian was led astray by this heresy.

Montanism attacked the discipline of the church, whereas Gnosticism attacked its dogma. The Mon-

tanists claimed a system of morality more perfect than that of the Apostles. They kept three Lents and denied the power of absolving from certain crimes. Montanus was especially noted for his greed for money.

58. *Manichœism* was the most noted heresy of the third century. Manes, its founder, was a Persian slave who became heir to a rich magician. In 277, Archelaus, bishop of Cascar, proved in a controversy that Manes was an impostor.

The principal errors of the Manichees were the following: 1*st*, They condemned generation; 2*nd*, They denied the resurrection of the body; 3*d*, They rejected the Old Testament, and some of them the New; 4*th*, They asserted a dual principle, one good, the other evil; 5*th*, They denied the freedom of man's will; 6*th*, They said baptism was not necessary to salvation; 7*th*, They believed in the transmigration of souls. They also taught that Christ had only the appearance of a body; but that He was the ideal light-clad soul teaching men truth. Some of these teachings were detestable and most unreasonable.

59. *Novatianism* is a heresy that started about the middle of the third century. It derived its name from a Roman priest whose name was Novatian. Novatian enjoys the notoriety of being the first antipope. After the election of Pope St. Cornelius in 251, Novatian had himself consecrated bishop and proclaimed head of the church.

Novatian sent legates to Carthage. St. Cyprian, the archbishop, would not communicate with them. Cyprian wrote to all the bishops of Africa exhorting them to remain true to the Papacy, "the root and matrix of the Catholic Church."

The anti-pope wrote to Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, saying, among other things, that he became pope with great unwillingness. Dionysius answered that, if he did so unwillingly, he could prove it by willingly renouncing the position.

Among the errors of the Novatians were the denial of the power to forgive sins committed after baptism, and the re-baptism of their converts. In 253 Pope Cornelius held a council at Rome which condemned this heresy.

60. *Samosatianism* is so called from Paul of Samosata, who became bishop of Antioch in 262. His principal error was, that Christ did not exist before His birth in the stable of Bethlehem.

61. *Donatism* is a heresy that arose in North Africa in the fourth century and claimed that the true church consisted only of saints. All, except themselves, had fallen away from purity of doctrine. They claimed that they alone could validly baptize.

Donatus taught that the Father was greater than the Son, and the Son greater than the Holy Ghost. His followers, however, did not generally imbibe this doctrine.

Donatus endeavored to usurp the see of Carthage

and have the consecration of its true bishop, Cæcilian, declared null and void.

At a council held in the Lateran palace, Rome, Cæcilian was declared legitimate bishop of Carthage and Donatus was condemned. This was in the year 313. But the Donatists were not satisfied, and in 314 a council held at Arles again declared Cæcilian the legitimate bishop of Carthage.

The Donatists split up into many sects and continued to harass the church for about three centuries. St. Augustine, the great bishop of Hippo, was their principal opponent. In 411 he met 279 of their bishops in conference at Carthage. Owing to the ability and vigor of the great St. Augustine the Donatist heresy was vanquished and after a time vanished from the earth.

62. Arius, a priest of Alexandria, in the beginning of the fourth century, taught that the Son of God was distinct from the Father in person and nature. In other words, he denied the Divinity of Jesus Christ. He was an ancient rationalist. The rationalists of to-day deny Our Saviour's Divinity. His principal doctrine was, that the Son of God is a creature. It agreed with the teaching of Gnosticism and Manichæism that the Son is inferior to the Father.

Arius was a Libyan by birth. He began his heretical teaching in Alexandria about the year 320. We are told that the bishop of Alexandria was speaking to his priests on the Trinity in Unity,

when Arius, who was distinguished for his learning, contradicted him and said that since the Son was begotten, He must have had "a beginning of existence, being made out of nothing like other creatures." He also said that the Son was liable to sin in His own nature. He denied that the Son was from the substance of the Father.

The early fathers had taught that there is but one God, that the Son is God, and that the Son is distinct from the Father. But Arius asserted that the Son of God is a creature who existed before all ages, yet was not co-eternal with the Father.

Arius was very much aided in spreading his heresy by Constantia, sister of the Emperor Constantine. They tried to induce the emperor to favor the heresiarch. He decided to request Pope Sylvester to convoke a general council. In the year 325 the first general council was convened at Nice. Arius and his heresy were condemned.

Arianism, like all other heresies, was soon divided into many sects. The principal of these were the *Anomœians*, who contended that the Son was dissimilar to the Father; and the *Semi-Arians*, who said that the Son was of a *similar* nature but not of the *same* nature as the Father.

63. *Pelagianism* taught that Adam's sin was not transmitted to his posterity. Pelagius preached at Rome and various other places in the beginning of the fifth century, denying original sin and the necessity of grace.

St. Augustine, amongst others, combated the teaching of Pelagius in his works, "De Gestis Pelagii," "De Gratia Christi," etc.

Pelagius was a monk born in Britain. While in Rome, about the year 400, he was joined by Celestius, another monk. Owing to the activity and ability of St. Augustine their heresy did not make much headway, and they soon found an asylum at Constantinople with Nestorius. The Council of Ephesus condemned Pelagianism with Nestorianism.

64. *Nestorianism* held that there are two persons as well as two natures in Jesus Christ.

Nestorius was born in Syria, educated at Antioch, where he entered a monastery, became a priest, and lived a strict life. In 428 he became bishop of Constantinople.

In a sermon preached about this time Nestorius objected to the title of Mother of God. "Let no one," he said, "designate the Blessed Virgin as Mother of God."

Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria, combated this heresy. What Athanasius did in counteracting the evils of Arianism, what Augustine did against Pelagianism, that Cyril did against Nestorianism. Finally the Council of Ephesus was convoked by the Pope in 431 and Mary was declared Mother of God.

65. Eutychianism taught that Christ consisted of but one nature.

This heresy takes its name from Eutyches, an

abbot of a monastery at Constantinople. Eutychians are sometimes called Monophysites.

They were condemned by the Council of Chalcedon in 451. This council taught that in Christ there are two natures, the nature of God and the nature of man. Both Eutychianism and Nestorianism aimed direct blows *at the Incarnation.*

II.

The external trials of the early church were the various persecutions waged against her. "If they have persecuted Me," our Lord said, "they will also persecute you."

66. The Jews were the first persecutors of the early Christians. Having crucified the Master, they waged a relentless warfare against the disciples. They forbade them to preach, cast them into prison, scourged them and put them to death. They stoned St. Stephen to death, murdered St. James, the first bishop of Jerusalem, and sent St. Paul in chains to Cesarea. The persecution, during which St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, was put to death, occurred the year after Our Lord's crucifixion. During this persecution, it is said, about two thousand Christians were martyred. The Jews continued the persecution of the Christians until the Romans, under Titus, destroyed the city of Jerusalem in the year 70, killed thousands of the citizens, carried others into captivity and scattered the remainder of the first persecutors of the early church.

The persecutions waged by the Jews against the Christians were insignificant when compared with the cruel and widespread Roman persecutions. During the first three centuries of Christianity, the Roman emperors waged a continual and relentless warfare against the Christians.

There were ten cruel general persecutions. History tells us of ten emperors who were the principal persecutors: Nero, Domitian, Trajan, Adrian, Marcus Aurelius, Septimius Severus, Maximin, Decius, Valerian and Diocletian.

67. Under *Nero*, A. D. 37 to 68, occurred the *first general persecution* of the Christians. In the year 64, they were falsely accused of having set fire to the city. On this account they were bitterly persecuted. Some were cast into the Tiber, others torn to pieces by wild beasts, others beheaded or crucified, and still others, covered with pitch, were used as torches to light the imperial gardens. It was during this persecution, that St. Paul was beheaded and St. Peter crucified, head downward, in the year 67.

Vespasian, the successor of Nero, did not persecute the Christians.

68. The *second* general persecution was under *Domitian*, A. D. 81 to 96. It was during this persecution that St. John, after being cast into a kettle of boiling oil and coming out unharmed, was banished to the Island of Patmos.

These two persecutions were not so widespread as succeeding ones.

The Roman officials at first confounded Christianity with Judaism. The Jews took pains to correct this erroneous impression, and as Christianity became better understood, its incompatibility with Pagan ideas stood out in bold relief. Various charges were brought against them. They were called traitors, magicians and atheists.

69. Under *Trajan*, successor of Nerva, occurred the *third* persecution. Trajan was emperor from A. D. 98 to 117. St. Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, was the most illustrious martyr of this persecution. His martyrdom occurred about the year 117. Three popes suffered martyrdom under Trajan, Sts. Clement, Evaristus and Alexander. Another illustrious victim of this persecution was St. Simeon, bishop of Jerusalem. He was the second bishop of that see, being the immediate successor of the Apostle St. James the Less. Simeon was crucified in the year 108. He was 120 years old at the time of his martyrdom.

Trajan ordered that if any one denied that he was a Christian, and offered sacrifice to the gods, he was to be pardoned. Those who refused to sacrifice were executed as followers of an unlawful religion.

"If the Tiber overflows," Tertullian says, "if the Nile does not overflow, if there is a drought, an earthquake, a scarcity, or a pestilence, straightway the people cry, 'The Christians to the lions.'"

70. The *fourth* persecution was that under *Adrian*, who ruled from 117 to 138. Pope St.

Telesphorus was the most illustrious martyr of this persecution. St. Symphorosa, her seven sons, and a large number of martyrs yielded up their lives during the fourth persecution.

71. Marcus Aurelius succeeded his father-in-law, the Emperor Antoninus Pius. During the reign of *Marcus Aurelius* from 161 to 180 occurred the *fifth* persecution. This emperor was, perhaps, the most systematic and cruel of the persecutors of the Christians. A philosopher, a warrior and an author, he failed to understand the beauty of the Christian religion.

His "Meditations" breathe a somewhat Christian spirit, as "It is against its will that the soul is deprived of virtue. The remembrance of this will make you more gentle to all mankind . . . . Remember that patience was given you to practice for men's good." Notwithstanding his beautiful thoughts, he bitterly persecuted the Christians in Asia, in Gaul, and in other portions of the empire.

During this reign occurred the martyrdom of St. Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, in the year 169. The Roman official tried to make Polycarp renounce his religion, but the saint remained firm. "What harm is it," said the judge, "to call the emperor your Lord and offer sacrifice to save your life?" "I will not do it," said the noble saint.

Then the people, recognizing him, cried out: "It is the teacher of Asia. It is the father of the Christians. It is the destroyer of our gods. It is

he who has taught so many others to abjure the religion of the state."

The judge once more exhorted Polycarp to obey the emperor's edicts and to speak against Jesus Christ. The holy bishop indignantly replied, "Four score years I have served Jesus Christ, and He has never done me any harm; on the contrary He has loaded me with favors, and you would have me speak against Him. Once more I tell you I am a Christian. That is my religion." These courageous words so enraged the emperor's officers, that they shortly afterwards had him cast into a fire. The flames did not harm him. This miracle so enraged the governor, that he had the holy man stabbed with a dagger. St. Polycarp's is but an example of many martyrdoms of these cruel times.

72. *Septimius Severus* governed from 193 to 211. During his reign was waged the *sixth* persecution. At the beginning of his reign he protected the Christians. Towards its close, however, there was a change. This persecution was most severe in Africa. At Alexandria, Leonides, the father of Origen, was put to death, and the son, a mere youth, almost shared the same fate. Hundreds were put to death exclaiming, "We die joyfully for Christ, Our Lord."

During this persecution Sts. Perpetua and Felicitas, two young women or girls, and countless others were martyred at Carthage.

73. The *seventh* persecution was during the

reign of *Maximin* of Thrace, who ruled from 235 to 238. Maximin was the son of a Goth whom the soldiers had proclaimed emperor after the assassination of Alexander Severus in Gaul.

The household of Alexander Severus contained many Christians. Against these Maximin first vented his hatred. Then he turned his attention towards the ministers of religion, believing that if the shepherds were taken away the flock would soon scatter.

74. The next persecution was during the reign of *Decius*, 249 to 251. The church suffered more severely during this reign than at any other time.

Decius undertook the entire suppression of Christianity. In the year 250 he issued an edict requiring all Christians to renounce their religion and follow the religious ceremonies of the Romans.

At first death was inflicted principally upon bishops, who were looked upon as ringleaders. Fabianus, bishop of Rome, was put to death. He was succeeded by Pope Cornelius, whom Lucian succeeded. Both of these, like so many of their predecessors, suffered martyrdom. Besides these three popes, the noted virgins Victoria, Agatha, Anatolia, and great numbers of other Christians, perished under the most frightful tortures.

In this persecution the persecutors sought not so much the death as the apostasy of the Christians. To attain this object, frightful and rigorous tortures were applied everywhere. While many were martyred, some apostatized.

St. Gregory of Nyssa says: "This emperor ordered the prefect to force the Christians by terror and by every kind of torture to the worship of the gods."

On account of the fearful tortures resorted to, this is the only persecution that furnishes any number of Christians who became apostates.

75. The *ninth* persecution was under the emperor *Valerian*, 253 to 260. In 257 this emperor issued his first edict against the Christians. This edict forbade the assembly of Christians and threatened those who disobeyed with imprisonment and other punishments. Another edict ordered all bishops, priests and deacons to be beheaded; it also ordered the confiscation of the property of Christians, and, if they did not abandon their religion, they were to be arrested and put to death.

Pope St. Sixtus II., bishop of Rome; his deacon, Lawrence; St. Cyprian, bishop of Carthage; Fructuosa, bishop of Tarragona, and many others, were victims of this cruel order.

Pope Sixtus was arrested while celebrating Mass in the catacombs. After his sentence he was brought back to the catacombs and beheaded on the spot where a short time before he had offered up the Holy Sacrifice.

76. After an interval of about forty years of peace, the *tenth* and last general persecution against the Christians broke out. This persecution began in the year 303 under *Diocletian*, who was emperor from 284 to 305.

Eusebius tells us in the eighth book of his history of the increasing numbers, wealth and influence of the Christians; of their valuable services to the emperor; and of the costly churches they were erecting in every city. He also tells us that Galerius, who, with Constantius Chlorus, assisted the emperor as Cæsars, filled the mind of Diocletian with hatred against the Christians, and convinced him, that the tendency of Christianity was opposed to the welfare of the Roman empire.

Diocletian was finally persuaded to issue an edict against the Christians. He first ordered the destruction of Christian churches and Scriptures. Afterwards he turned his attention to the clergy and faithful. They were arrested, cast into prison, tortured and put to death. Many were hung up by the feet and fires built under them. Others had their noses and ears cut off, their eyes and tongues torn out, melted lead poured over them and their bodies cut in pieces.

The Theban Legion suffered martyrdom during this persecution. This noble band of heroes was recruited from the Thebais in Egypt. With their leader, Mauritius, they incurred the anger of the tyrant by refusing to persecute the Christians. Other illustrious victims of this persecution were St. Sebastian, a Roman officer, who suffered martyrdom by being pierced with arrows; and Sts. Agnes, Lucy and Anastasia. Lactantius, who lived from 260 to 325, and was a witness of what he writes,

says in the "Deaths of Persecutors:" "Diocletian, who always wishes to pass for intelligent and astute, inflamed with anger, immediately began to cut his familiars to pieces. He sat in judgment and burned the innocent with fire . . . . Persons of every age and sex were thrust into the flames, not merely one at a time, for so great was the multitude that they were collected into a heap and a fire built around them."

77. The accession of the Emperor Constantine and his conversion in the beginning of the fourth century practically ended the persecutions.

From this brief sketch of the principal persecutions we see that all the powers of earth and hell were united in trying to destroy the early church. Nevertheless Christianity grew, strengthened and expanded while the proud Roman empire was destined to destruction. Having spent its force in trying to destroy the Christians, it met its punishment. Hordes of northern barbarians overran the empire with fire and sword in 476 and dethroned Romulus Augustulus, the last emperor of the West.

CHAPTER X.

THE TRIUMPHS OF THE EARLY CHURCH.

THE darkest trials that harassed the early church were, as we have seen, caused by heresy and persecution. The church triumphed over both. A teacher of error arose. His new teaching attracted the attention of multitudes and drew them away from the truth.

The successor of St. Peter summoned the bishops of the church, who, after discussing the new teaching, condemned the heresy. Unity and peace followed, for all recognized the voice of Peter in the voice of her Pontiff. (I.) The church triumphed in her pontiffs.

Persecution was waged against God's people. Strengthened by the Master, they were steadfast. The blood of the Christians became the seed of the church. (II.) The church triumphed in her martyrs.

I.

The Triumphs of the Early Church in Her Pontiffs.

78. In treating of the councils of the early church, we saw that the Pope convoked the general

councils, presided over them in person or by his representative, and confirmed their decrees as supreme head of the Catholic church.

The Pope was always believed to be the successor of St. Peter, whom Christ made head of the church.

St. Peter, the First Pope.

79. All the writers of the first five centuries held that Peter occupied the first place among the apostles. Tertullian says that Peter was the rock upon which Christ built His church and that Christ left the keys to him and through him to the church. Peter, then, is the source of jurisdiction in the church. St. Cyprian speaks of "Peter, on whom Christ built His church and from whom He instituted and showed the origin of unity." Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, in the beginning of the third century, a disciple of St. Polycarp, who was a disciple of St. John the Apostle, says that the Roman church was "the greatest, most ancient, known to all, founded and constituted by the most glorious Apostles Peter and Paul. Having built and founded the church of Rome, the blessed Apostles entrusted to Linus the administration of the episcopacy."

St. Linus, the Second Pope.

80. Linus, then, was the first successor of St. Peter as bishop of Rome and head of the church.

The words of Irenæus, just quoted, as well as the writings of Eusebius and others, assure us of this fact. After St. Peter's martyrdom, in the year 67, Linus succeeded him and governed the church until the year 78, about twelve years. St. Linus suffered martyrdom and his name is mentioned among the martyrs in the canon of the Mass. He was buried near St. Peter's tomb on the Vatican hill. Linus was distinguished for his humility, meekness and charity.

St. Cletus, the Third Pope.

81. Linus was succeeded by Cletus, who governed the church from the year 78 to the year 90. He suffered martyrdom and, like his predecessor, his name is in the canon of the Mass, which comes down to us from Apostolic times. He was buried near St. Linus. Some say that Cletus and Anacletus were the same person. There is little doubt, however, that they are two separate and distinct popes, Cletus reigning from 78 to 90, before Clement, and Anacletus, succeeding Clement, governed the church of God from the year 100 to the year of Our Lord 112.

Mention is made of these early popes to show the line of succession in the first and second centuries. The early fathers believed in the primacy of Peter. They also held that the pope, or bishop of Rome, is his successor and that the Roman church is the "Chair of Peter."

St. Irenæus, in naming the successor of St. Peter, begins with Linus, and says that the faithful everywhere must agree with the teaching of the Roman see.

St. Augustine thus writes to the Donatists: "Come, my brethren, if you wish to be grafted in the vine . . . . Reckon up the bishops even from the very see of Peter. That is the rock which the haughty gates of hell do not overcome."

During these early ages of the church appeals were sent to the Pope from every part of the world. He sent legates to every part of Christendom, and, after the conversion of Constantine, all governments recognized the authority and primacy of the pope of Rome.

St. Leo the Great.

82. Perhaps the greatest pope of the first five centuries was Leo the Great, who governed the church from 440 to 461 A. D. Leo was a man of strong character and was a zealous defender of God's church. When his letter to Flavian was read at the Council of Chalcedon the fathers exclaimed, "Peter has spoken by the mouth of Leo." This expression clearly shows the belief of the early church.

St. Leo wrote one hundred and forty-one epistles on faith and discipline. His one hundred and one sermons that remain are models of zeal and eloquence.

His writings not only gained many victories for

the church of his age, but served as a bulwark against succeeding heresies. He converted many pagans and infidels. He triumphed over the Manichees, the Arians, the Nestorians, the Eutychians and the Donatists. He clearly explained the mystery of the Incarnation and confounded the Eutychians by proving that Christ had a true body.

From his writings we learn that the Christians of his day believed in the characteristic Catholic doctrines and practices concerning the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the Holy Eucharist, the praying to saints, the honoring of relics, the fast of Lent, the confession of sin, the use of lights during Mass and other religious ceremonies, and the supremacy of St. Peter and his successor, the pope.

One of St. Leo's great triumphs was won over Attila, the leader of the hordes of Northern barbarians, who threatened Rome with destruction. Attila was king of the Huns, one of the fiercest of the northern nations. It included all the tribes from the Rhine to the Volga. He called himself "The Scourge of God." His subjects feared him, his enemies trembled when his name was mentioned. Having murdered his brother in the year 444, he invaded Illyria and all the region about the Black Sea. With an army of five hundred thousand men he spread death and destruction everywhere. Seventy of the most flourishing cities in Thrace, Macedonia, and Greece were destroyed, their inhabitants murdered and the surrounding country laid waste.

He invaded Italy about the year 452, destroyed Aquileia, Padua, Vicenza, Verona and other places, pillaged Milan and Pavia and advanced upon Rome. Pope Leo I. visited the terrible barbarian in his camp, overawed him by his sacred authority, persuaded him to withdraw his barbarian hordes from the vicinity and saved Rome from ruin and desolation.

To have checked the terrible Attila, and to have saved Rome was one of the greatest glories of St. Leo's pontificate.

Leo was but one of a long list of grand and heroic men whom God raised up to rule His church in its infancy. A list of all the popes of the first five centuries will be found at the close of this chapter.

Peter received all the prerogatives of the primacy from his Master. He also received the power to confer these prerogatives and privileges on his successors. The Apostolic Fathers are witnesses to the primacy of Peter. St. Clement of Rome in the first century is an example of it. St. Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, in the second century, recognizes the primacy of the successor of St. Peter, as does St. Cyprian in the third, St. Athanasius in the fourth and St. Augustine in the fifth century.

St. Cyprian calls the church of Rome the first church, the bishop of Rome the first bishop and says, "To be united with the see of Rome is to be united with the Catholic Church . . . . The church is built upon Peter for the sake of unity." This

primacy of the pope, as well as the unity of the church, was the cause of many signal triumphs of the early church.

II.

The Church triumphed in Her Martyrs.

83. We have seen the frightful torments undergone by the Christians during the various persecutions. The Christians bore these punishments patiently. They were but following in the footsteps of their Master. "The disciple is not above his Master," and they were happy when suffering torture, even martyrdom, for Christ's sake. Nothing is more interesting, nothing more instructive, nothing more inspiring than the example of the heroic courage of the martyrs. Each anniversary of their death the church reminds us of their virtues in the celebration of their feasts.

Here we will recall some of the trials, sufferings and triumphs of a few of those heroic souls in the persecutions of the primitive church.

St. Stephen.

84. We could not well speak of the martyrs without a brief mention of St. Stephen, the first martyr. The seventh chapter of the Acts of the Apostles tells us the story of his triumphant victory.

The Apostles had chosen him as a man full of

faith and the Holy Ghost, and had ordained him deacon of the church. To show the truth he preached, he worked great signs and wonders. Some of the Jews disputed with him. Being defeated in their disputation, they brought him before the council. Stephen said to the high priest among other things: "You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did so you do also. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you have been now the betrayers and murderers, who have received the law by the disposition of angels and have not kept it." Hearing this the Jews were very angry, and Stephen, raising his eyes, saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God and said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

They rushed upon him, dragged him outside the city and stoned him to death while he said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. . . . . Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep in the Lord."

This brief history of the heroic martyrdom of St. Stephen manifests his wonderful patience and charity. These two virtues, deeply imbedded in his heart, were the cause of his great triumph over his cruel executioners. Notwithstanding his great suffering, he forgave his murderers. Imitating his

Divine Model, dying in torments, he raised his eyes to heaven and prayed for his enemies: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

St. Stephen was the first martyr of the New Law. He had not the example of others to cheer him. Hence his martyrdom was more heroic, his death more glorious and his triumph more noticeable than that of others, who followed upon the same blood-stained path.

When Stephen was put to death Saul was a willing witness. Saul, the persecutor of God's church, shortly after that time began to be a changed man. St. Stephen's patience, charity and prayers, were a potent cause of the conversion of St. Paul.

Stephen was one of the first Jewish converts. He was one of the first seven deacons ordained by the Apostles. His zeal, patience, meekness, charity and forgiving spirit have been a fruitful source of many triumphs for God's church.

St. Domatilla.

85. One of the most illustrious of the virgin martyrs of the first century was St. Flavia Domatilla. She was a niece of the emperor Domitian and also of St. Flavius Clemens. Flavius Clemens was a consul under Domitian and was put to death by that cruel emperor. Domitian banished Domatilla on account of her faith. Because she refused to sacrifice to idols she was burnt to death under Trajan

about the year 98. There is a cemetery excavated on her property near Rome called the Catacomb of St. Domatilla.

Domatilla was of royal lineage. She belonged to the Flavian family, to which the emperors Vespasian, Domitian and other royal personages belonged. Notwithstanding her high worldly position she was happy only when suffering for virtue. She had all the honors the world can offer, she had all the luxuries money can buy, they did not satisfy her cravings for happiness.

Triumphing over the allurements of the world, its honors, its wealth and its pleasures, she became an humble servant of God here in order that she might rule with Him hereafter.

St. Eustachius.

86. St. Eustachius, who was called Placidus before his conversion, was a noble Roman general. One day while hunting with some officers, the hunters saw a number of beautiful stags. Placidus pursued one which was larger and more beautiful than the others. In the excitement of the chase he was soon separated from his companions. In a deep ravine he came near the stag and was surprised to see an image of the crucifixion shining in dazzling light between its branching horns. Amazed and awestricken, he heard a voice, saying: "Placidus, why dost thou follow me? I am Christ, whom thou servest without knowing. Thy

charity and deeds of benevolence to the poor have stood before Me and have made Me follow thee with My mercy." Placidus could not remove his eyes from the wonderful vision. Although he heard, he did not understand and he asked, "Who speaks?" Again he heard these words: "I am Jesus Christ, who created heaven and earth out of nothing, who created man, and for his redemption appeared in human flesh, was crucified and rose the third day from the dead. Go, Placidus, to the city and seek the chief pastor of the Christians and be baptized."

Placidus now understood all. He fell upon his knees in silent adoration and grateful prayer. Rising, like Paul on the way to Damascus, with courage to embrace and proclaim the truth, he returned to the city. After relating to his wife the story of the wonderful vision and his conversion, he started with her and their two children, three and five years old, for the catacombs in search of the chief bishop of God's church. Pope Anacletus ruled God's church at this time. They found him at the Catacomb of St. Priscilla on the Salarian Way. With joy and gratitude the holy pope baptized the Roman general and his family. Placidus took the name Eustachius, his wife was called Theopista, and his children Agapius and Theophiston.

After his baptism, Eustachius met with misfortune, and to escape suffering and persecution, fled with his family to Egypt. Arriving in Africa, the wicked captain kept his wife a captive, and sent him on

shore with his two little children. This was a cruel blow.

He had other bitter trials to endure. Travelling into the interior of the country, he came to a river swollen by late rains. Leaving one child on the shore, he started across with the other. Before he reached the opposite bank, attracted by cries, he turned and saw an enormous lion carrying off the older child. Leaving the younger on the bank he returned to pursue the forest king. Scarcely was he out of the stream, when the younger boy was seized by a wolf. So paralyzed was he by the sight, that he could not move a step. He knelt and asked God for patience to bear his trials.

Having committed his family to God he determined to bear manfully all his troubles. He spent some years unknown working as a laborer on a farm. All these years he spent in labor, prayer and solitude. His faith alone sustained him.

Fifteen years passed. The Roman empire was about to go to war with Persia. The emperor Trajan was looking for some one to command his warlike legions. He thought of Placidus, who was always victorious in the past. But where was he? Rumor said he still lived. Two veterans, Antiochus and Achacius, started to search for Placidus. They were about to give up the search, when, one morning, they came to a beautiful, well-kept farm. They inquired if a Roman citizen named Placidus lived in these parts. Something in the noble bearing and

majestic appearance of the old man, whom they addressed, reminded them of their general. Mutual recognitions followed.

Placidus returned to lead the Roman army again to victory. Before victory perched upon the banners of the Roman soldiers, they were led into an ambuscade and were saved by the prompt action of two Numidian youths. The general made these courageous young men captains, and kept them near him. The strange part of this story is that the two youths were the sons of Placidus, the elder of whom was saved by shepherds from being devoured by the lion, and the younger was taken from the jaws of the wolf by some farmers. Placidus also had the happiness of being restored to the arms of his wife, Theopista.

About this time Trajan died and Adrian was elected emperor by the army.

The general was summoned to Rome. The emperor went to meet the general and embraced him. A great procession was formed and the general, with his family in a gilt chariot drawn by four white horses, followed the army. All hailed Placidus as the saviour of the empire.

When they came to the temple of Jupiter, Placidus (Eustachius) and his family refused to enter. They would not sacrifice. The shouts of applause were changed to cries of "Death to Christians."

The noble Eustachius, the victorious general, was

brought before Adrian. When asked by the emperor why he did not sacrifice, Eustachius replied, "I am a Christian and adore only the true God." He and his family were confined that night in the Mamertine prison. The next morning, September 20, in the year 120, they were taken to the Coliseum.

They were led into the arena in chains, and two lions and two bears let loose. The wild beasts would not touch the martyrs. This so enraged Adrian that he ordered the martyrs to be placed in a bronze bull and slowly consumed by fire. In this way did St. Eustachius and his family receive the crown of martyrdom.

Eustachius had often triumphed with the Roman army. But the grandest triumph of that noble hero was that which closed his earthly career in the Coliseum and ushered in the triumph which shall be eternal.

A portion of this story of St. Eustachius is probably legendary. Its main features, however, such as his conversion and the martyrdom of himself, his wife and his two sons under Adrian, seem to stand the test of strict examination.

St. Felicitas.

87. St. Felicitas was a pious Christian widow, who, with her seven sons, suffered martyrdom in the year 150. After her husband's death, she spent her time in praying, fasting, and performing works of

charity. Her noble example caused many conversions. This enraged the heathen priests, who complained of her to the emperor.

The prefect of Rome, at the command of the emperor, Antoninus, had her and her seven sons arrested. He tried to induce her to sacrifice to the false gods, and told her, that, if she did not, she and her sons would be severely punished. She answered: "Do not think to frighten me by threats, nor win me by fair speeches. The Spirit of God will make me victorious over your assaults. My children will live eternally with Christ, if faithful to Him."

Her sons were cruelly scourged with whips and clubs, and put to death in various ways, exclaiming, "I confide in my Lord Jesus Christ. . . . There is only one God. . . . You will never be able to overcome our faith. . . . All who do not confess Christ to be the true God, shall be cast into eternal flames."

St. Felicitas was more than a martyr. She was a martyr in each of her seven dear sons martyred before her eyes. She rejoiced to offer her children and herself as a sacrifice to Christ. The church celebrates their triumphal entry into heaven on July 10.

St. Lawrence.

88. This saint was born in Rome, about the beginning of the third century, and suffered martyrdom, August 10, 258, during the persecution of

Valerian. He was one of the seven deacons of Rome, under Pope Sixtus I. Lawrence had charge of the treasury of the church, and also looked after the welfare of the poor widows and orphans. He was summoned before the tribunal of the emperor, and ordered to give up the treasures of the church. He distributed all the money and riches in his possession among the poor. Afterwards he collected together the poor, the sick, and the orphans, and brought them to the authorities, declaring that they were his treasures. The prefect was so enraged at this that he ordered Lawrence to be put to death by slow degrees. He caused a great gridiron to be prepared, live coals to be thrown under it, and Lawrence to be bound over this slow fire until his flesh was broiled. After burning for some time, the saint said to the judge, "Let my body be turned: one side is broiled enough." The martyr prayed continually to God for patience and resignation. His heroic example caused many conversions. His glorious triumph the whole church celebrates each year with great joy and devotion.

St. Cecilia.

89. St. Cecilia is one of the most illustrious of the saints. She is the patroness of sacred music. She, even in that early age, often joined instrumental with vocal music in sounding God's praises. Although she had made a vow to consecrate her

life to religion, she was compelled by her parents to marry a noble Roman youth, named Valerian. Her beautiful life and her firm faith converted Valerian and his brother Tiburtius. They were both beheaded for their religion. Some days afterward Cecilia finished her glorious triumph. Her martyrdom, by being beheaded after she had been almost suffocated for three days, occurred on Nov. 22, 230.

St. Agnes.

90. One of the most attractive of God's saints is the little St. Agnes. She suffered martyrdom Jan. 21, 304. With God's immaculate Mother, she is considered a special patroness of holy purity. She was but about twelve years old when she was commanded to offer incense. Instead of obeying, she made the sign of the cross. She was arrested and subjected to the most horrible tortures. A pagan youth, who attempted improper liberties, was stricken blind. She was condemned to be beheaded. Loaded with chains, she was led to the place of execution. The hardened spectators could not restrain their tears when they saw so young and tender a virgin so cruelly treated. After a brief prayer, Agnes bowed her head in silent adoration of God. With one stroke the executioner severed her head from her body. Rome, whose wealthiest young noblemen were ready to throw themselves and their riches at her feet, was the scene of the noble triumph

of this youthful virgin, who would have no other spouse but Jesus Christ.

St. Pancratius.

91. This saint also suffered martyrdom under Diocletian about the 12th of May, 304. He was only 14 years old at the time of his death. When asked by the representative of the Roman emperor who he was, the noble youth, like so many of his fellow-martyrs, answered by making the sign of the cross. The judge understood its meaning. It told him that the youth was a follower of Him who died upon the cross; and filled with anger, he ordered the decapitation of the heroic boy.

From these brief sketches of a few of the early martyrs, we learn that their fidelity, patience, piety, and heroism were confined to no age, sex, or condition of life. The fragile virgin, the tender youth, the poor laborer, the rich nobleman, and the learned priest or bishop, all vied with each other in showing their devotion to their Lord and Saviour. Fire and sword, gibbet and savage beasts were used to torture and kill these innocent victims.

As Christ by His death on the cross won a victory over the world, so His martyrs in every age have repeated this triumph. Each death of a martyr is a grand and glorious triumph for the church. No period of history is more consoling, tender, and elevating than these centuries of persecution.

92. We have briefly reviewed the first five hundred years of the church. We have followed its growth, step by step, from its germ at Jerusalem on Pentecost, ten days after Our Lord's ascension, until it was planted in all nations.

We have seen that the church in the very beginning had its hierarchy, bishops, priests, and deacons.

We have beheld the small body of believers at Jerusalem becoming a great power everywhere. Their upright life, noble character and great charity were a revelation and wonder to the Pagans.

We have seen Peter, that poor obscure priest, entering Rome, the imperial mistress of the world. Peter went about the emperor's throne preaching his Master's heavenly doctrine, performing many wonderful works and converting thousands of Cæsar's subjects.

With the conversions the persecutions began. During the first three hundred years there were ten cruel general persecutions. Millions of martyrs were sent to heaven for steadfast belief in Christ and His teachings. These early ages furnish the noblest examples of Christian virtues. These virtues they learned from the teaching of the church, centuries before the Bible was printed and generally diffused.

During this time all the energies of that powerful empire which had conquered all the nations of the earth were directed against God's church. The church grew, strengthened and expanded, while that

mighty colossus of an empire was destined soon to vanish from the earth.

The church triumphed over all her enemies and persecutors. They are no more. She flourishes and will continue to flourish until the end of time.

In contemplating the growth, teachings, trials, and triumphs of the early church, we cannot but be convinced of the truth, beauty, grandeur and antiquity of the Catholic Church. For, as we have seen, the Catholic Church and the primitive church are identical.

Let us, with Our Divine Saviour, pray that the grand old faith, which has won so many victories in the past, will continue her triumphs until all shall be in this "one fold of the one shepherd."

APPENDIX.

Important Events of the First Five Centuries of Christianity.

A. D.

1. Birth of Our Divine Saviour at Bethlehem.
12. Finding the Child Jesus in the Temple.
33. Jesus dies on the Cross.
33. The Coming of the Holy Ghost. The beginning of the Christian Church. Peter's first sermon converts 3,000. St. Paul's conversion. St. Stephen's martyrdom. The apostles go as missionaries to all lands.
39–40. St. Matthew writes his Gospel.—Disciples first called Christians at Antioch.
51. The first council at Jerusalem.
54–58. St. Paul preaches at Ephesus, Macedonia, Greece and other places.
67. St. Peter and St. Paul martyred at Rome.
70. Jerusalem destroyed by Titus.
95. St. John the Evangelist is cast into a caldron of boiling oil and comes out uninjured. Banished to Patmos, where he writes the Apocalypse.
107. St. Simeon, bishop of Jerusalem, put to death.
117. Martyrdom of St. Ignatius, bishop of Antioch.
202. St. Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, put to death.
230. Martyrdom of St. Cecilia.
250. St. Anthony, the first hermit, appears.

A. D.

306. The celibacy of the clergy made a fixed law by synod of Elvira.

312. Victory of Constantine and end of "Age of Martyrdom."

325. First General Council at Nice.

361. Julian the Apostate becomes emperor.

381. Second General Council at Constantinople.

387. Death of St. Monica, mother of St. Augustine.

390. St. Ambrose compels Emperor Theodosius to do penance for his crime.

410. Rome is taken and plundered by Goths under Alaric.

430. St. Augustine dies. Vandals invade Africa.

431. Third General Council at Ephesus.

432. St. Patrick converts the Irish people.

440. Leo the Great becomes pope.

449. Pope Leo meets Attila and saves Italy.

451. Fourth General Council at Chalcedon.

476. Fall of the Roman Empire in the West, under the Emperor Romulus Augustulus.

496. Conversion and baptism of Clovis, the French king.

The Following are the Popes of the First Five Centuries of Christianity:

1.	St. Peter	who died in the year		67
2.	St. Linus	"	"	78
3.	St. Cletus	"	"	90
4.	St. Clement	"	"	100
5.	St. Anacletus	"	"	112
6.	St. Evaristus	"	"	121
7.	St. Alexander	"	"	132

8.	St. Sixtus I.	who died in the year		142
9.	St. Telesphorus	"	"	154
10.	St. Hyginus	"	"	158
11.	St. Pius I.	"	"	167
12.	St. Anicetus	"	"	175
13.	St. Soter	"	"	182
14.	St. Eleutherius	"	"	193
15.	St. Victor I.	"	"	203
16.	St. Zephyrinus	"	"	220
17.	St. Calixtus I.	"	"	227
18.	St. Urban I.	"	"	233
19.	St. Pontian.	"	"	238
20.	St. Anterus.	"	"	239
21.	St. Fabian.	"	"	253
22.	St. Cornelius	"	"	255
23.	St. Lucius I.	"	"	257
24.	St. Stephen I.	"	"	260
25.	St. Sixtus II.	"	"	261
26.	St. Dionysius	"	"	272
27.	St. Felix I.	"	"	275
28.	St. Eutychian	"	"	283
29.	St. Caius	"	"	296
30.	St. Marcellinus	"	"	304
31.	St. Marcellus I.	"	"	309
32.	St. Eusebius	"	"	311
33.	St. Melchiades	"	"	314
34.	St. Sylvester I.	"	"	337
35.	St. Marcus	"	"	340
36.	St. Julius I.	"	"	352
37.	St. Liberius	"	"	363
38.	St. Felix II.	"	"	365

39.	St. Damasus	who died in the year		384
40.	St. Siricius	"	"	398
41.	St. Anastasius I	"	"	402
42.	St. Innocent I	"	"	417
43.	St. Zozimus	"	"	418
44.	St. Boniface I	"	"	423
45.	St. Celestine I	"	"	432
46.	St. Sixtus III	"	"	440
47.	St. Leo I (the Great)	"	"	461
48.	St. Hilary	"	"	468
49.	St. Simplicius	"	"	483
50.	St. Felix III	"	"	492
51.	St. Gelasius	"	"	496
52.	St. Anastasius II	"	"	498
53.	St. Symmachus	"	"	514

From the above list of pontiffs it will be seen that fifty-two successors of St. Peter ruled the Church of God during the first five centuries. Every one of these early pontiffs is a canonized saint, and nearly every one a martyr.

The Following are the Emperors of Rome from Augustus to Constantine:

1.	Augustus	who died in the year		14
2.	Tiberius	"	"	37
3.	Caligula	"	"	41
4.	Claudius	"	"	54
5.	Nero	"	"	68

6.	Galba, Otho and Vitellius	who died in the year		69
7.	Vespasian	"	"	79
8.	Titus	"	"	81
9.	Domitian	"	"	96
10.	Nerva	"	"	98
11.	Trajan	"	"	117
12.	Adrian	"	"	138
13.	Antoninus	"	"	161
14.	Marcus Aurelius	"	"	180
15.	Commodus	"	"	192
16.	Pertinax	"	"	193
17.	Severus	"	"	211
18.	Caracalla	"	"	217
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20.	Heliogabalus	"	"	222
21.	Alexander	"	"	235
22.	Maximin I	"	"	238
23.	Two Gordians, Maximus Balbinus and Gordian III	"	"	244
24.	Philip	"	"	249
25.	Decius	"	"	251
26.	Gallus	"	"	253
27.	Valerian	"	"	260
28.	Gallienus	"	"	268
29.	Claudius II	"	"	270
30.	Aurelian	"	"	275
31.	Tacitus	"	"	276
32.	Probus	"	"	282
33.	Carus	"	"	283
34.	Numerian	"	"	284
35.	Diocletian and Maximian	abdicated in the year		305

36.	Constantius Chlorus	who died in the year		306
37.	Severus	"	"	307
38.	Galerius	"	"	311
39.	Maxentius	"	"	312
40.	Maximin	"	"	313
41.	Licinius in the East	"	"	324
42.	Constantine, the first Christian emperor	"	"	337

List of Works Read or Consulted.

For the convenience of those who wish to investigate for themselves the matter presented in the foregoing pages, we give the following partial list of works read or consulted in its preparation:

1. Addis and Arnold—A Catholic Dictionary.
2. Alzog—Universal Church History.
3. Botalla—The Supreme Authority of the Pope.
4. Baart—The Roman Court.
5. Brennan—Church History.
6. Brueck—Church History.
7. Butler—Lives of the Saints.
8. Capel—Waterworth's—The Faith of Catholics.
9. Crawford—Ave Roma Immortalis.
10. Didon—Life of Christ.
11. Farrar—Early Christianity.
12. Milman—Gibbon's The Fall of the Roman Empire.
13. " —History of Latin Christianity.

14. Moxom—From Jerusalem to Nicæa.
15. Myers—A General History.
16. Newman—The Arians of the Fourth Century.
17. Northcote—The Roman Catacombs.
18. O'Brien—History of The Mass.
19. O'Kane—Notes on the Rubrics.
20. O'Reilly—The Martyrs of the Coliseum.
21. Parsons—Studies in Church History.
22. Sacræ Liturgiæ Praxis—De Herdt.
23. Salmon—The Ancient Irish Church.
24. St. Augustine and other early Fathers.
25. Wapelhorst—Compendium Sacræ Liturgiæ.

REVIEW QUESTIONS.

Chapter I.

Who was emperor when Christ began his public life? Where and when did St. Peter begin to preach the Gospel? Who was first bishop of Antioch? of Rome? Give a sketch of the life of St. Peter. What was St. Paul called before his conversion? Tell something of his life. Who first preached the Gospel in Spain? Who was the first bishop of Lyons, France? When did he die? When was Christianity first preached in Ireland? With what success? Who was the first Christian emperor?

Chapter II.

What is meant by the hierarchy? Who was always considered head of the church? What was the division of the clergy even in Apostolic times? What was the duty of bishops? of priests? of deacons? How were bishops chosen in the early church?

Chapter III.

Who, after the inspired writers, were the most important writers and fathers of the first century? Who was Barnabas? What did he write? Who was author of the Pastor? Tell something of the life and writings of Clement of Rome. What were the Apostolic Constitutions? the Apostolic Canons? Who were the principal writers of the second century? Describe

the life and writings of Ignatius. Who was Polycarp? What did Justin Martyr write? Who were the writers of the third century? Tell something of the life and writings of Tertullian; of Origen; of Cyprian. Name the leading ecclesiastical writers of the fourth century. Who was the great opponent of Arianism? Who were the four great doctors of the western church? of the eastern church? For what is Ambrose noted? What do you know of Basil and his family? Who were the great writers of the fifth century? What is the best known work of Chrysostom? Describe the life and writings of St. Augustine. What were the principal writings of Cyril of Alexandria?

Chapter IV.

What did the Great Teacher promise? What is a great consolation to a Catholic? Why could not the church teach error? What does the church teach regarding the Bible? Who made the canon of Holy Scriptures? What is meant by canon of Holy Scriptures? Who authorized the list of Old Testament books? Who in the early church gives a full list of the books of the Bible corresponding to the Catholic canon? Name the books of the O. T.; of the N. T. What books and parts of books are omitted by Protestants? What did St. Augustine think about private interpretation of Scripture? What did the primitive church believe about the sacraments? How many? What about Baptism? Confirmation? Holy Eucharist? Penance? Extreme Unction? Holy Orders? Matrimony? What sacramentals were known to the primitive church? What did the early church teach concerning Purgatory? Indulgences? Invocation of saints? Honoring of relics? Honoring the Blessed Virgin? The Immaculate Conception? The supremacy and infallibility of the Pope?

Chapter V.

What does liturgy mean? What is the center of Catholic worship? Into what two parts was the commemoration of the last Supper divided in the early church? What was the Mass of Catechumens? Of what did the Mass proper consist? What were the three principal liturgies of primitive Christianity? Describe each of them. How do they agree? What was the principle of Pope St. Celestine?

Chapter VI.

What proof do the Roman Catacombs furnish? What are the Catacombs? How many are there around Rome? Describe them. What is their origin? For what were they used by the early church? What great man explored the Catacombs during the present century? What Catholic doctrines do we find in the paintings and inscriptions of the Catacombs? Which is the most famous Catacomb?

Chapter VII.

What does creed mean? What were the principal creeds of the early church? Why is the Apostles' Creed so called? What are the important truths contained in this creed? Why is the Nicene Creed so called? On what is this profession of faith based? Who drew up this creed? When was the creed of Constantinople formulated? What is the principal difference between this and the Nicene Creed? What Creed is said every Sunday at Mass? What do the words Filioque mean? When were they added to this creed? What particular doctrines are clearly taught by the Athanasian Creed?

Chapter VIII.

When was the first Council of the Christian Church? Who presided? When was the Council of Nice? How many bishops were present? Who presided? What question was decided? When and where was the second ecumenical Council held? When was the Council of Ephesus? What heretic was condemned by it? Where was the fourth general Council held? When? Who was condemned by it? What did he teach? By whom were all these Councils convoked?

Chapter IX.

What was the first important heresy? Who was Simon Magus? Menander? Saturnine? Who were the Ebionites? The Docetæ? The Montanists? What is meant by Manichæism? Novatianism? Samosatianism? Donatism? Arianism? Pelagianism? Nestorianism? Eutychianism? Who were the first persecutors of the Christians? Under what ten emperors did the ten general persecutions take place?

Chapter X.

What does Tertullian say about Peter, the first Pope? Who succeeded St. Peter? Who was the third Pope? What did the early fathers believe concerning the Pope? Who, after Peter, was the greatest Pope of the first five centuries? Name one of St. Leo's great triumphs. Who was the first Christian martyr? Describe his martyrdom. Who was St. Domatilla? Tell the wonderful story of St. Eustachius. Describe the martyrdom of St. Lawrence. For what was St. Cecilia noted? Who was St. Agnes? Describe the martyrdom of St. Pancratius. How do you prove that the Catholic Church and the primitive Church are identical?

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